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THE

LIFE

OF

ROBERT, LORD CLIVE:

COLLECTED FROM THE FAMILY PAPERS

COMMUNICATED BY

THE EARL OF POWIS.

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL

SIR JOHN MALCOLM, G.C.B. F.R.S. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

WITH A PORTRAIT AND MAP.

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present work was commenced in consequence of the possession of a body of unpublished documents, which, having been preserved among the family records at Walcot, were thrown open to the author by the friendship of the Earl of Powis. These consisted chiefly of the whole correspondence of Lord Clive, containing the originals of nearly every letter which he had received from the time when he first filled a public situation in India, down to the period at which he finally quitted that country; with copies of answers to many of the most important of them. They contained also several memoirs regarding the chief enterprises in which he was engaged, and minutes of council on the leading measures of his government.

From these sources, aided by the Reports of the different Parliamentary Committees, and other authentic materials, published and unpublished, Sir John had completed the introduction, and the first thirteen chapters, before he left India, in 1830. The fourteenth and fifteenth he finished after his return, and was engaged with the sixteenth, when death put a close to his labours.

The author was accustomed to bestow his final revision upon each successive portion of his work before he advanced to that which was to follow it. He had, consequently, made no preparation beyond the point where his progress was arrested; nor had he sketched out or indicated the plan he meant to pursue.

A gentleman for whose abilities Sir John Malcolm entertained a high respect, and by whose judgment it was his intention to have profited before he committed his work to the press, kindly offered to supply such a continuation as was necessary to bring down the narrative to the death of Lord Clive.

The materials which were here available were, of necessity, less abundant, less original, and less authentic than those from which the earlier part of the Memoirs had been composed.

After Lord Clive reached England, he filled no public situation, and had the means of settling his most important affairs directly by personal communication. The incidents of his English life were to be drawn chiefly from a limited and occasional correspondence with his more intimate friends, and the parliamentary proceedings from the reports in the periodical works of the day; in which the details of contemporary occurrences are infinitely less ample than are now afforded by similar publications.

The writer, therefore, by whose pen the concluding chapters were contributed, laboured under a difficulty which would have discouraged any person less influenced by friendship for the deceased, and by kindness for those on whom the publication devolved; but it has been surmounted in a manner which, it is hoped, will

enable the reader to pursue the subject to its close, without any feeling of unsatisfied curiosity.

The family of Sir John Malcolm cannot close this brief notice, without expressing to the continuator of the work their warmest gratitude for the pains his affection has bestowed upon the last labours of his friend.

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INTRODUCTION.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE STATE OF INDIA IN 1746.

BEFORE entering on the Memoirs of Clive, it will be useful to take a succinct view of the state of India, at the period when he commenced his career in that country, and more especially of the coast of Coromandel, which was the scene on which he first displayed those talents that were afterwards to raise him to such eminence.

The emperors of Delhi, since the death of Aurung-zebe (A. D. 1707), had rapidly declined from the power they once possessed. The government of distant countries was intrusted to soubahdars (or viceroys), who invariably took advantage of the dissensions in the imperial family, or the weakness of a reigning prince, to endeavour to render themselves independent. The same motives and principles which governed the conduct of these vicegerents, actuated those

whose allegiance and obedience they claimed in virtue of their delegated powers from the nominal Sovereign of India. Hindoo rajahs, and Mahomedan nabobs owned or rejected the sway of their superiors according to their means of resistance; while the Mahrattas, a name unknown to the military history of Asia before the middle of the seventeenth century, threatened, by a system * of predatory warfare, to complete the destruction of these Mahomedan conquerors, whose chiefs, whether engaged in contest for the imperial Crown, the high office of soubahdar, or the inferior rank of nabob, appear to have lost, in their rancorous hostility to each other, all sense of union and of common danger; and to have blindly courted the aid of allies who (a little foresight would have shown them) were rising fast to greatness upon their ruin. These observations on the conduct of the Mahomedan princes are not more applicable to the connections they formed with the Mahrattas, than to those which, in the eighteenth century, they began to contract with Europeans. The Portuguese, who had discovered a passage to India in 1498, enjoyed the exclusive commerce with that country for a complete century; but their short and bril-

* For a description of this system, see Malcolm's Central India, vol. i. p. 66.

liant career was essentially different from that of the European nations who succeeded them. Their establishments were all maritime. They conquered and subdued the princes and chiefs on the shores and islands of India; but seldom, if ever, carried their arms into the interior, or engaged in any of those offensive and defensive alliances with native states, that must have hurried them into contests, to support which the resources and strength of the mother country would have been altogether inadequate. In consequence of this policy, their established character for valour, and the strength of their fortifications, they did not become objects of attack to the principal native powers of India. Neither the Emperors of Delhi, nor their princely delegates had, or desired to have, any naval force. They attached no value to the sea-coast or to islands, but as they might produce them profit through the medium of customs: and the increased commerce, consequent to the settlement of the Portuguese at Goa and other parts, was calculated to reconcile them to a nation, whose warfare on the continent of India was almost entirely limited to contest with the petty princes and chiefs who occupied or claimed the shores where they desired to settle.

The effect of the victories gained over these princes was improved by the valour, wisdom, and

energy of the great men * who first established the Portuguese power in India; but all these impressions were lost by the subsequent conduct of their degenerate successors, who, selected by the favour, or removed by the caprice, of a weak and corrupt court, became the ready instruments of tyranny and oppression. This evil was augmented by the continual changes of their local rulers, and by other circumstances, calculated to bring ultimate ruin on their affairs, even had that not been accelerated by the attack of European states; to which the very considerations which saved them from the hostility of the great native princes of India left them peculiarly exposed. Every settlement which they had made depended exclusively upon their possessing a superiority at sea, and having no rivals either in commerce or war; but their monopoly of the trade of India, for so long a period, arose chiefly from a respect to their right as the first settlers, which extended even to that of the exclusive navigation to that country by the Cape of Good Hope. When this right was invaded, when their fleets came in contact with those of Holland and England, their power fell as rapidly as it had risen; and, like a meteor, left no trace but a

* Of these the most celebrated were, Vasco de Gama, Albuquerque, Nunez, and John de Castro.

recollection of its dazzling and short-lived splendour.

The successful voyages of Drake and others excited the merchants of England to seek establishments in India: but the enterprise of individuals was deemed unequal to so expensive and hazardous an undertaking; and a company was formed, to open and pursue a channel of commerce, from which such great gains were anticipated. This company and the nation were stimulated to greater efforts by the Dutch, having at this period (the close of the sixteenth century) sent several ships round the Cape of Good Hope. The English now began to settle in different parts of India. The first factory was established at Surat, in 1612, and continued to have the control over all the petty settlements on the western side of the peninsula, till the cession of Bombay, made in 1668 by the King to the Company, when that town, from its fine harbour, and central situation for commerce, soon rose to be the superior settlement in that part of India; while Madras obtained the same rank on the coast of Coromandel, and for some period counted Calcutta* as one of its subordinates. The latter

* A settlement at Hooghly was first made in 1640, by agents from Surat, who obtained permission to establish themselves, through the intercession of Mr. Boughton, a surgeon then in great favour with the Emperor of Delhi. This settlement was afterwards moved to Calcutta in 1686.

at the period when Clive's career in India commenced, had become independent, and, like the settlements of Madras and Bombay, was under the government of a president and select committee; but it was still, in its establishment and means of defence, inferior to either of the other presidencies.

In the year 1698, another East India Company was formed, and received an exclusive right of trade in consideration of a loan to government; but the charter of the old Company was a few months afterwards confirmed, and the trade to the East Indies was divided between the two Companies. The jarring interests of these bodies, who obtained advantages over each other according to the favour of corrupt and changing administrations in England, had brought such distress on both, that, in 1702, their prayer to unite was attended to; a new charter was granted, and from that period they have been denominated "The United East India Company." By this charter, they were permitted to employ civil servants, to raise troops, and to make war and peace in India. Their policy, however, had been to avoid (as being ruinous to their commercial pursuits) all grounds of offence to native states; and they had not even made those fortifications which were necessary to defend their property from spoliation. The conduct which they thus

pursued had been strongly recommended * to them by Sir Thomas Roe when embassador at the court of the Emperor of Delhi, and a modern historian † of India observes, that "if Sir Thomas Roe had lived to the present day, he might have urged the trade with China as a proof, by experiment, of the proposition he advanced." But assuredly no cases ever existed more opposite than those of China and India. Though the government of the former, by a rigid system of exclusion, keeps European settlers dependent upon its own power, it secures them against all enemies. The native powers of the latter, by engaging in alliance, and inviting to interference in internal politics, the subjects of one European state, leave to the other, who may be in rivalry or hostility with it, no option between certain ruin, and employing means of self-defence and retaliation. This truth was never more completely evinced than in 1744, when war was declared between France and England. On receipt of this intelligence, the forces under the control of the companies of the two nations on

* "It is not," Sir Thomas Roe observes, "a number of forts, residences, and factories that will profit you: they will increase charge, but not recompense it. The conveniency of one with respect to your sales and the commodity of investments, and the wise employing of your servants, is all you need."

† Mill, vol. i. p. 30.

the coast of Coromandel, prepared to prosecute hostilities by land and sea, upon a scale which involved both in a scene of operations more suited to empires than to commercial factories. The results of these operations will appear wonderful to him who only considers the handful of troops which either party could bring into the field; but the improvements which, within the last two centuries, had taken place in Europe, gave its soldiers an incalculable advantage over those of Asia, before the latter were taught, by repeated defeats, to make war upon more equal terms with their European opponents. The superiority of a well-constructed machine over manual labour is not more extraordinary, than the advantages which discipline and the improvements in fire-arms and artillery afford to a regular body of troops over an irregular and badly armed force. No valour can equalise the combat, and the impressions produced by defeat are rendered tenfold greater by a comparison of numbers. The well-commanded, and well-trained battalion moves amidst ten thousand of its rabble opponents, like a giant with a thousand hands, which defend or strike, according to the dictates of one mind, and to whom an unconnected force, where every individual acts for himself, can offer neither injury nor resistance.

It is to this fact far more than to the want of of personal courage in the men, or pusillanimity in their leaders, that we must refer the astonishing success of small numbers of disciplined troops, in the early wars of India; and it was from observing this success that the rulers of the country so eagerly courted their aid.

It was, undoubtedly, good policy in the English to abstain from all interference with native states. It must have been obvious that, from the moment they left the limits of their factories, they would be involved beyond the possibility of retreat; and that the consequence of the course of policy in which they engaged could be no further foreseen, than that it was opposed to all those principles of commercial pursuit, upon which their establishments were founded. With such a prospect, nothing could justify the authorities in India in the part they acted, but proof that it was one to which they were compelled, in order to prevent positive ruin, and to support the honour and the interests of their country against a powerful enemy. Whether or not they had this justification at the moment when the following Memoir opens, will be seen by a short view of the state of affairs in the Carnatic at that eventful period of our history in India.

The Payeen Ghaut, or Lower Carnatic, well known as the dominions of the Nabob of Arcot,

extends along the coast of Coromandel, from the southern limits of the Guntoor Circar to Cape Comorin, a distance of about 560 miles. Its breadth, from the sea to the Ghauts (or mountains), which separate it from the territories of Hyderabad and Mysore, is no where above 100 miles; and in some parts little more than fifty. This country was formerly governed by Hindoo princes, but these had for several centuries acknowledged a Mahomedan superior. Its nabob, Sadut Oolla, in the beginning of the eighteenth century (A. D. 1710), having no children, adopted two nephews, the eldest of whom, Doost Ali, on the death of his uncle, declared himself his successor; and the younger, Bauker, became governor of the strong fortress of Vellore. Nizam-ul-Mulk, who was at this period soubahdar of the Deckan *,

* The name Deckan, or Deckhan, which means South, a very ancient name, continued to be given, when the power of the Moghul sovereigns of Delhi was in its zenith, to that part of the empire which lay to the southward of the Nerbuddah. This division which was called a Soubah, was governed by a Soubahdar, or Viceroy, whose authority was for a long period acknowledged by all the petty states within his circle, though many of these yielded neither tribute nor obedience unless compelled. When the house of Delhi declined, Nizam-ul-Mulk succeeded in rendering the possession he held as a delegate of the emperor hereditary in his family; but the example of usurpation spread rapidly, and the other states, as they attained strength, threw off their dependence upon him and his descendants, till their sovereignty became limited to their present territories of

to which district of the empire the Carnatic belonged, offended at the want of deference to his supremacy, evinced by this act of the self-constituted nabob, prevented that regular confirmation of his title which was required from Delhi. Doost Ali had two sons, and several daughters, one of whom was married to Mortaza Ali, the son of his brother at Vellore, and another to a relation of the name of *Chunda Sahib*, who became soon afterwards his Dewan, or minister; and on the death of the Hindoo prince of Trichinopoly (A.D. 1736), this chief was sent with a force, under pretext of demanding tribute of the Ranee, or queen, but with the real design of making himself master of that fortress,—an object which he effected more by artifice than force. The part he acted after obtaining possession of the capital of the southern part of the Carnatic, combined with his having halted for some days at Pondicherry, with the governor of which he had several interviews, give reason to conclude

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Hyderabad. They still retain the title of Soubhadar of the Deckan; but, their power having been contracted by political events, their influence in that capacity is now confined to those territories over which their rule is established, which may be described as bounded by the river Taptee to the north, the Kishna to the south, the province of Bider to the west, and the northern Circars of Masulipatam and Guntoor to the east.

that Chunda Sahib laid, at this period, the foundation of that friendship, which was subsequently publicly proclaimed between him and the French government.*

* The following note, communicated by a friend eminently acquainted with the history of India, will be perused with interest: —

"The country mentioned in the text by the name of Paeen-Ghât-Carnatic, was annexed, after its reduction, by the generals of Aurungzebe, to the Souba, or imperial province of Hyderabad, and in all the financial records it is mentioned as only a division of it. The grants of Jaghires, made at that time by the imperial government, were so numerous and considerable, as to leave very little of the revenues arising from it to be received into the treasury. Those who were most favoured by these grants of Jaghires were of a tribe known by the name of Noayets, or newcomers, from their late arrival in the Carnatic. Saadet Ali, the first nabob, as mentioned in Orme's history, was of that tribe; as were Mortiz-Ali, and many others, who were found in the possession of extensive Jaghires, when Nizam-ul-Mulk came into the Carnatic, in 1743. That prince, in order to restore the Mogul authority, appointed a deputy of his own at Arcot, Anwer-u-deen Câwn, who was nowise related to, or connected with, the tribe of Noayets, and who was one of the officers who had came with him to the Carnatic.

"The person who afterwards made himself so conspicuous by his connection with the French, viz., Chunda Sahib, was also a Noayet. His real name was Hussein Dost Cawn. Duff Grant, in his late history of the Mahrattas, says, that this man was known by no other name when he was a prisoner at Sattarah.

"The appellation of Chunda Sahib was only given to him in his family when a boy. Yet it has continued to be used in history in distinguishing him; although, besides his name

Sufder Ali, the son of the nabob who had gone with Chunda Sahib to Trichinopoly, returned, after its capture, to Arcot, where a new Dewan, or minister, Meer Assud, was appointed; who took every step he could to prevent the accomplishment of those ambitious designs which he seemed convinced his predecessor in office had formed.

The Marathas had formerly been in possession of a great part of the Carnatic; and one of their chiefs had become Rajah of Tanjore, a small but rich principality, lying to the southward of the Cavery, and fertilised by its waters, and those of the Coleroon. Incited by the reigning rajah, and by the Hindu family who had been expelled from Trichinopoly, 10,000 of this nation, under Ragojee Bhonsela (A. D. 1740), invaded the Carnatic. In the first action with these plunderers, Doost Ali was slain, and his son, Sufder Ali, immediately assumed the title of nabob; but, dreading the results of the Maratha invasion, he

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above-mentioned, the title of Shems-ul-Dowla was conferred on him by the Nizams in the French interest. It is not unlikely, that his being known to the English only by the name of Chunda Sahib was, in some measure, owing to his rival Mahomed Ali, supported by them, constantly designating him by that appellation, and rather contemptuously, Chunda being a vulgar appellation, often that of menial servants."—D. H.

sent his family and treasures for protection to Pondicherry. When the war with the Marathas was concluded, he took his family away; but Chunda Sahib left his, fearing, perhaps, the result of the intrigues, which were going on against him. These became too soon apparent; the Marathas retired; but, secretly excited by the court of Arcot, they soon returned, and surrounded Trichinopoly, which they took, after a siege of three months; and, having appointed one of their leaders, Morari Row, to be its governor, they sent Chunda Sahib, whom they had made prisoner, to be confined in a fortress near Sattarah.

Sufder Ali, who was at this time (A. D. 1741) in great alarm at the apprehended resentment of the Soubahdar of the Deckan, to whom he had remitted little or no tribute, went, for security, to reside in the fortress of Vellore, pretending, at the same time, that he was in great poverty, and intended to proceed to Mecca; and, to give more currency to this last report, he sent his son and family to Madras, from whence he said he meant to embark. His minister, Meer Assud, is stated to have advised him to put his family and property under the protection of the English, from a conviction of the intrigues the French were carrying on at this period with Chunda

Sahib, of whose ambitious views he continued to entertain the most serious alarm.

The retreat of the Marathas had been purchased by the promise of a large sum, and every district of the Carnatic was heavily assessed to make up this amount. This assessment produced great discontent, and the principal rulers of districts, leagued with Mortaza Ali, in a conspiracy against the nabob, who was assassinated; and his treacherous relative and murderer, having distributed largesses to the army, proclaimed himself nabob, and marched to Arcot.

Mortaza Ali desired to have Sufder Ali's son and property delivered up to him; but the English refused to comply with his request, being urged to this refusal by the Maratha chief Morari Row, and several of the principal officers of the nabob's army. Many of the latter openly expressed their detestation of Mortaza Ali; and the cowardly prince was so alarmed at those symptoms of danger, that he fled in the disguise of a female from his court at Arcot, and found refuge in his stronghold of Vellore.

As soon as the flight of Mortaza Ali was known, the army proclaimed Mahomed Saeed (the young son of Sufder Ali) nabob; and, having appointed a minister, the prince was conveyed to Wandewash, which fortress was commanded by one of his near relations.

Such was the state of the Carnatic, when Nizam-ul-Mulk, Soubahdar of the Deckan, advanced to Arcot (A. D. 1743). His immense army * met with no resistance. This old and celebrated prince is said to have been shocked at the state of anarchy in which he found the fine country he now, for the first time, visited. Every officer who had been trusted with a petty government was introduced as a nabob, till the soubahdar, enraged at this assumption of rank, under cover of delegated authority, exclaimed, "I have seen, this day, eighteen nabobs, in a country where there should be but one; scourge the next fellow who comes with that title!".

The son of Sufder Ali paid his homage, and was kindly received; but, though directed to be treated with lenity and respect, he was refused leave to return to Wandewash.

Nizam-ul-Mulk having, by promises and presents, more than by arms, persuaded Morari Row to evacuate Trichinopoly, completed the settlement of the Carnatic, and returned to his capital, Hyderabad.

Khojah Abdulla, a native Toork, from beyond the Oxus, one of his most distinguished officers, who had accompanied him upon his late

* This army is stated to have consisted of 200,000 foot, and 80,000 horse.— *Orme*, vol. i. p. 51.

expedition, was nominated to the government of the Carnatic; but on the morning on which he was to commence his march to Arcot, he was found dead in his bed.[1] The charge of this important province was now given to Anwar-u-Deen, a brave and experienced soldier, of a respectable, though not noble family. He had filled several stations of consequence, and had, for sixteen years, been governor of the extensive districts of Ellore and Rajahmundry.

Nizam-ul-Mulk, from regard to popular feeling, which was in favour of Mahomed Saeed, the son of Sufder Ali, signified his intention to make that youth nabob of Arcot, whenever he attained the years of manhood; stating, that the officer, to whom he had given the principal charge, was only to hold it till that period: but his placing the young prince under the care of Anwar-u-Deen augured ill for the accomplishment of this object (A. D. 1744). The youth was, however, for some time, treated with great honour and respect; subject only to the disquietude arising from the clamorous demands of some Patan soldiers for arrears of pay. At the marriage of one of his relations, Mahomed Saeed was compelled, by usage, to receive Mortaza Ali, the murderer of his

[1] Orme, vol. i. p. 52.

father. The appearance of that chief was ominous. Nothing, however, happened till near the close of the ceremony. When the young prince went forward to meet his guardian Anwar-u-Deen, the captain of the discontented Patans, under the pretence of asking pardon for his former insolence, approached his person, and stabbed him to the heart. As the boy fell lifeless, a hundred swords were drawn, and the Patan leader and his comrades were hewn in pieces. Mortaza Ali was next sought for, but he had fled to Vellore. Anwar-u-Deen was loud in his lamentations, and apparently active in the pursuit of all concerned. The whole of the Patan race were banished, and their houses rased to the ground; but these demonstrations, though they satisfied Nizam-ul-Mulk, did not lull the suspicion of the public; and it was generally believed that Anwar-u-Deen was concerned with Mortaza Ali in destroying a prince whose right to be nabob, when he came of age, was recognised by the soubahdar of the Deckan, and who enjoyed the attachment of all ranks, not more on account of his promising character, than from the recollection of the benefits the country had enjoyed, for thirty years, under the administration of his ancestors.

When war occurred between England and France, the latter country had every thing to

expect from the ability and enterprise of La Bourdonnais, the commander of her fleet, in India, and Dupleix, the governor of the settlements on the coast of Coromandel.

It may be questioned, whether France has ever produced a more skilful or more able naval officer than La Bourdonnais. Nor were his talents limited to the profession to which he belonged: to his efforts and genius the islands of Bourbon and the Mauritius owe all their prosperity. He was as active and successful in improving the colonies of his own country, as he was fortunate and distinguished in his attacks upon those of its enemies.

Before the arrival of La Bourdonnais in India, the English had the superiority at sea, and the French settlements were almost defenceless: but the government of Pondichery prevailed upon the nabob of Arcot to require the governor of Madras to abstain from making any attack upon the French; and Commodore Barnet, who commanded His Majesty's fleet, was induced, by the entreaty and representations of the Company's government, to adopt a similar line of conduct.

When, however, the French admiral arrived, he resolved to be fettered by no arrangements made on shore, from injuring, to the utmost of his power, the foes of his country. It is mortifying to read the narrative of the events of this

year (A. D. 1746), when the superior energy of the French so completely triumphed, both on sea and land. The English fleet, after some indecisive efforts, left the coast, and Madras * was taken.

* "This settlement," according to Orme, vol. i. p. 65., "had been, about 100 years, the principal establishment of the English nation on the coast of Coromandel. It was built on a territory granted by the Great Mogul to the East India Company, which extended about five miles along the sea shore, and about one mile inland. The town consisted of three divisions; that to the south, extended about 400 yards in length from north to south, and about 100 yards in breadth. None but the English, or other Europeans under their protection, resided in this division, which contained about 50 good houses, an English and a Roman Catholic church, together with a residence for the factory, and other buildings belonging to the Company. It was surrounded with a slender wall, defended with four bastions, and as many batteries; but these were very slight and defective in their construction, nor had they any outworks to defend them. This quarter has long been known in Europe by the name of Fort St. George, and was in India called, for distinction, the White Town. On the north of this, and contiguous, was another division, much larger and worse fortified, in which were many very good habitations, belonging to the Armenian and to the richest of the Indian merchants, who resided in the Company's territory; this quarter was called the Black Town. Beyond this division, and to the north of it, was a suburb, where the Indian natives of all ranks had their habitations promiscuously. Besides these three divisions, which composed the town of Madras, there were two large and populous villages, about a mile to the southward of it, within the Company's territory; and these were likewise inhabited by Indian natives."

La Bourdonnais agreed, however, to restore it to the English, on the payment of a ransom.

Nothing could be more desperate than the situation of the Company's affairs: fortunately, the jealously and collision of the two great men, to whom the interests of France were entrusted, prevented their complete ruin.

Dupleix, governor of Pondichery, a man of an ardent and comprehensive mind, cherished, very early, the most ambitious views of raising his nation to unrivalled power in India. He saw, with jealousy, the independent power of La Bourdonnais; and, instead of entering into the plans of that able officer *, which were directed to the conquest of all the English settlements in India, he acted in direct opposition to his views; nor did he hesitate to violate the pledge the admiral had given.†

* The representations of Dupleix received more attention in France than those of La Bourdonnais; and that great man, instead of the high rewards to which he was entitled, was imprisoned four years in the Bastille. The injustice done him was too tardily acknowledged; and he died before another opportunity was afforded of elevating still more his own name, and of exposing the ingratitude of his country.

† "M. Dupleix was greatly assisted in all his transactions with the natives of India by his wife, a Creole, born and educated in Bengal, where he had married her, while he was there in the service of the French East India Company. Her knowledge of the Hindostanee language had been the means of introducing her to the family of Chunda Sahib, when they

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Possessed, as the French now were, of a very superior force, Dupleix could not endure the

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took refuge at Pondichery, during his confinement at Sattarah with the Mahrattas : and this laid the foundation of the French intrigues with him. In all these, M. Dupleix's lady made herself conspicuous, by corresponding, in the name of her husband, with those who could be brought into action for favouring the French views of interference, and supporting the cause of Chunda Sahib. She then became known all over that country by the name of Jân Begum, which she assumed in the seal to all her letters. Her own Christian name was Jeanne, which gave some colour to her converting it into the Persian word on her seal, as familiar to Mahomedans.

"It must be acknowledged that the French at this time, viz., during M. Dupleix's government, had greatly the advantage of the English, by their superior knowledge of the languages and usages of the nations of India. Their Catholic missionaries, especially the Jesuits, who had travelled inland, had been very instrumental in their acquiring that knowledge; while the English confined themselves to their trade, and remained in total ignorance of any thing else. The French gave certain proofs of the superior information they had acquired, when they produced, at the conference with the English commissioners at Sadras, in 1754, the sunnuds or grants for the lands they had acquired in the Carnatic, which were all procured under the authority of the Mogul Emperor or his viziers; while those of the English were only from inferior agents of that government. It is true, that the sunnuds there produced by the French were objected to by the English as under the forged seals of emperors; yet it shows that they did not rest their claims on grants of inferiors, as the English did. It is, indeed, very remarkable, that the latter never, till a late period, possessed any others but those of the nabob Mahomed Ali in the Carnatic, ex-

thought of restoring Madras to the English; so that, when La Bourdonnais left the coast, he declared the capitulation null and void, and placed a French garrison in the town for its defence.

Anwar-u-Deen, the nabob of Arcot, was not an inattentive observer of these proceedings.

The English, who, in compliance with his intreaties, had refrained from attacking the French, when they could have done so with advantage, expressed a hope that now, when their enemies had the superiority, the nabob would interpose his authority for their protection; but they neglected to accompany this reasonable request with that bribe or offering, which, in an Asiatic court, is deemed an indispensable concomitant of all solicitations for aid; and Dupleix, already deeply versed in Indian politics, neutralised the inclinations of the professed friend of the English, by promising to make him master of Madras, for the repossession of which he intimated that the English would pay a rich ransom. The evasions of

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cepting for the ground of their original factories. It was not till Lord Clive obtained regular grants from the Emperor Shah Aulum, in 1765, when he obtained the dewanee of the provinces of Bengal, that the English could produce any other grants but those obtained from the nabob whom they themselves had set up."— D. H.

the French governor, however, soon convinced the nabob that he had been duped; and he sent an army of 10,000 men, under his son, Maphuze Khan, to retake Madras, which he appears to have thought would be very easily effected. The French garrison, consisting of one battalion, desisted from hostilities as long as they could, but they were at last compelled to retaliate; and the repeated defeats of the besiegers soon obliged them to retreat to Arcot; and that court, whose troops had never before come in contact with disciplined soldiers, seemed as if awakened from the influence of a spell, and viewed with just alarm, in all its magnitude and consequences, the imminent danger they incurred by allowing such settlements to be made upon their shore.

Dupleix, having been considerably reinforced by troops left by La Bourdonnais, determined on the siege of Fort St. David (A. D. 1746), the second settlement of the English on the coast of Coromandel.*

* Orme (vol. i. p. 78.), speaking of this settlement, observes:—

"The East India Company was here in possession of a territory larger than that of Madras; it had been purchased about 100 years before from the Indian prince of the country, and their title to it was confirmed by the Mogul's viceroy, when the Moors conquered the Carnatic. The fort was

The authorities entrusted with that settlement applied for aid to the nabob of Arcot; and that prince, who was full of resentment at the French, readily complied with their request, the English having consented to defray part of the expenses of their auxiliaries.

Maphuze Khan, and his brother, Mahomed Ali, were sent with a considerable body of troops,

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situated near the sea, twelve miles to the south of Pondichery: it was small, but better fortified than any of its size in India, and served as a citadel to the Company's territory. About a mile to the south of it, was situated the town of Cuddalore, in which the principal Indian merchants, and many of the natives dependent on the Company, resided. This town extended 1200 yards from north to south, and 900 from east to west: three of its sides were defended by walls flanked with bastions; that towards the sea was for the greatest part open; but a river passing from the westward, between Fort St. David and the town, flowed, just before it gains the sea, along the eastern side of the town, of which, whilst it washed the skirts on one hand, it was, on the other, separated from the sea by a mound of sand, which the surf throws upon the shore in most parts of the coast. To the westward of the fort, and within the Company's territory, were two or three populous villages, inhabited by the natives.

"The government of Fort St. David depended on that of Madras, to which it was immediately the next in rank; but, on the breach of the treaty of ransom, the Company's agents at Fort St. David regarding those of Madras as prisoners to the French, took upon themselves the general administration on the coast of Coromandel."

who, on their arrival, surprised a detachment of the French, that had been sent to take up an advanced position, and compelled them to retreat. The failure of this first, and of another attempt, on Fort St. David, induced Dupleix to try (and not without success) to detach the nabob from his connection with the English; who, deserted by their ally, appeared on the brink of ruin, when the fortunate arrival of an English fleet, under Admiral Griffin (March, 1747), obliged the French governor to draw all his troops within the walls of Pondichery.

The drooping spirits of the inhabitants of Fort St. David were, at the same time, raised by reinforcements of troops from Tellicherry and Bombay. All these were placed under the orders of Major Lawrence, an officer of high reputation in his Majesty's service (Jan. 1748), who had been nominated to the command of all the Company's forces in India.

The bad success of the French in their attempts against Fort St. David was evidently owing to other causes than the valour of its garrison: but the period was now arrived when the French, in their turn, were to act upon the defensive.

Admiral Boscawen, after an unsuccessful attempt to make himself master of the Mauritius, anchored at Fort St. David with a very consider-

able armament. The siege of Pondichery, which he immediately undertook, was the first military service in which Clive distinguished himself. The result was unfortunate, owing chiefly to the lateness of the season. Many questioned the skill of the gallant officer by whom it was conducted: his fame as a naval commander was justly high; but he had little, if any, experience of land service. It is, however, due to his reputation to remark, that he received no aid from the engineer, whose want of knowledge was apparent in every stage of this siege. Dupleix transmitted an account of it to all the princes of Coromandel, and to the Emperor of Delhi; and the result considerably increased his fame in every part of India.

He received, in return, compliments on his own prowess, and on the military character of his nation, which was, at this period, throughout Hindustan, considered greatly superior to that of the English.

The peace concluded between France and England (A.D.1748) was expected to terminate hostilities in India; but the trading companies of each nation, having received great reinforcements of men, which they were afraid to disband while their rivals retained theirs, both parties appear to have resolved on employing them in the contests of the native princes. "The English,"

according to a contemporary historian *, " in the line they pursued on this occasion, acted with great indiscretion; the French, with the utmost ambition."

Such are the only incidents to which it seems necessary to advert in this place. Any others requisite for understanding the transactions of Clive, will be mentioned in the course of the general narrative.

* Orme, vol. i. p. 7.

MEMOIRS

OF

LORD CLIVE.

CHAPTER I.

The family of Clive, established in Shropshire, since the time of Henry II., have, for a long period, possessed the small estate of Styche, in the parish of Moreton-Say, near Market-Drayton. At this seat of his ancestors, Robert Clive, the subject of this memoir, was born on the 29th of September, 1725.

His father, Richard Clive, married Rebecca, daughter of Nathaniel Gaskill, of Manchester, Esq., by whom he had a family of six sons, and seven daughters. He had been educated for the law, and continued, through a great part of his life, to practise that profession.

Mrs. Clive had two sisters, the one of whom, Elizabeth, was married, in 1717, to Daniel Bayley, Esq., of Hope Hall, near Manchester; and the

other, Sarah, to the Right Hon. Hugh, eleventh Lord Sempill.

Mr. Clive's eldest son, Robert, while not yet three years of age, was sent to his uncle, Mr. Bayley, in whose family he was trained and educated for several years, as his own son.

In the end of the year 1728, the infant Clive seems to have had a dangerous attack of fever. "If I were given to be superstitious," says Mr. Bayley, writing to the Rev. Mr. King at Styche *, "and to believe things ominous, I think I should omit writing to you; for it has been poor Bob's fate to grow worse, just after I have finished my letters. From the time of Andrew's leaving us till yesterday about five o'clock, he was worse than at any time yet; and the doctor discovered, by all his behaviour, that he apprehended full as much danger as ever; but since that time he has been much better, and we hope that *then* was the crisis of the fever. He slept pretty well last night; and, when awake, talked with his usual cheerfulness; and, I can say, is now better, and in a more hopeful way to recover than hitherto, if no relapse come upon him. He is, as you may well imagine, very weak; but the doctor doubts not his getting more strength if the fever continues (as it has begun) to leave him. This is

* Saturday Morning, Dec. 28th. 1728.

what account I can now send: you will excuse haste. Our services wait on Madame Clive and all the family."

Two days after Mr. Bayley again writes Mr. King:—

"Monday Morning, Nine o'clock.

"Thank God, I do now inform you that Bob continues better, and is in a very likely way to recover. We hope that the crisis of the fever was on Saturday last about noon, it having abated ever since. His exceeding patience is also exchanged for as eminent a degree of crossness, which we take as a good omen of his mending. I am writing this close to his bed-side, and he is crying with the greatest impatience for me to lie on the bed with him; nor will he be quiet one moment, with all the fine words I can give him, which now makes me conclude abruptly," &c.

On the 11th of January, Mr. Bayley informs his correspondent, that Robert had had another severe attack of fever; from which, however, he was so far recovered as to be very merry and able to walk himself. In answer to some remarks of Mr. King, he details the symptoms, and mode of cure adopted. The fever seems to have been connected with the stomach, and yielded to the usual remedies.

Mr. Bayley, about a fortnight afterwards, informs Mr. King of his nephew's recovery:—

Manchester, Jan. 26. * 1728.
" Sabbath Day evening, ten o'clock.

" REV. AND DEAR SIR,

" Yesterday Bob came down into the parlour, the first time. He goes on successfully with the bark, and is very merry, and good as it is possible. He is poor and thin; but in a brave way, and has a stomach for more meat than we dare give him. He can run about, and chatters continually, and is always asking questions, one of which I must enquire of you, before I can answer him; viz., when yourself and his aunt Fanny will come over to see him? We are all pretty well, and full of that joy which so happy any issue of so long and threatening an affliction naturally produceth. Our sincere respects and services to all: conclude me," &c.

" This afternoon, Bob, with some reluctance, suffered his aunt Bay † to go to chapel."

Young Clive seems to have resided chiefly with his aunt Bayley, down to at least the year 1732. In June of that year, Mr. Bayley gives his friend Mr. King some very characteristic traits of his nephew's temper. " I hope," says he ‡, " I have made a little farther conquest over Bob, and that

* Probably old style, and therefore 1729, N. S.

† Probably the name by which he designated his aunt Bayley.

‡ Manchester, June 9. 1732.

he regards me, in some degree, as well as his aunt Bay. He has just had a suit of new clothes, and promises by his reformation to deserve them. I am satisfied that his fighting (to which he is out of measure addicted) gives his temper a fierceness and imperiousness, that he flies out upon every trifling occasion; for this reason I do what I can to suppress the hero, that I may help forward the more valuable qualities of meekness, benevolence, and patience. I assure you, Sir, it is a matter of concern to us, as it is of importance to himself, that he may be a good and virtuous man, to which no care of ours shall be wanting."

These strong and early indications of future character, for he had not yet attained the age of seven, are not a little curious. The spirit of daring and of command seems to have been natural to him. The anxious care of his relations may have softened and soothed his impetuosity, but could not change the bent of his genius. The spirit of "the Hero," which already began to show itself, seems to have turned him from the peaceful sports of childhood, just as, at a later period, it called him to exchange his mercantile studies and occupations for the bustle and turmoil of war, so much more congenial to the ardour of his mind.

On the 26th of February, 1735, Clive lost his

aunt Mrs. Bayley, but he continued on an affectionate footing in the family, and always reverted with pleasure to the years he had spent among them.

Mr. Richard Clive formed high hopes of his son while yet a child. This anticipation of his future greatness, which seems to have been founded more on the boy's display of courage and sagacity, than on his acquirements as a scholar, was confirmed by the opinion of Dr. Eaton, to whose school, at Lostocke, in Cheshire, he was sent when very young; and this respectable man had the foresight to predict, "that if his scholar lived to be a man, and opportunity enabled him to exert his talents, few names would be greater than his."

At the age of eleven, Robert Clive went from Lostocke to Market Drayton, where he was placed under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Burslem. After a few years, he was sent to the public seminary of Merchant Taylors' school in London, whence he went again to a private school, kept by Mr. Sterling, at Hemel Hempstead, in Hertfordshire, with whom he remained till 1743, when he was appointed a writer in the service of the East India Company.

The few anecdotes that are preserved of the early life of Clive tend chiefly to show that he was endowed, in a remarkable degree, with that

constitutional courage which so essentially promoted his rise in the military profession, and which, it is probable, led him to adopt it.

One well-authenticated and extraordinary instance is recorded of his boldness as a boy. The church at Market Drayton, which stands on the side of a hill, has a lofty steeple, near the top of which is a stone spout of the form of a dragon's head. It was with no slight surprise and alarm, his companions, and some of the inhabitants, saw young Clive seated on this spout, and evincing by his manner an indifference, if not insensibility, to the danger of his situation.*

Several of the oldest inhabitants of Market Drayton not only confirm this fact, but add, on the testimony of their parents, that Clive was wont to levy from some of the shopkeepers contributions in pence and trifling articles, in compensation to himself, and the little band he led, for abstaining from breaking their windows, and other mischievous tricks; and one old man mentioned to a gentleman†, who resided near Styche, that he had been repeatedly told by a person who

* His object is said to have been to get a smooth stone which lay on this projecting stone spout, for the pleasure of jerking it. — *Biog. Brit.* art. CLIVE.

† The Rev. Mr. Smithwick related this anecdote to me in 1827.

witnessed the action, that, when a little dam broke, which the boys had made across the gutter in the street, for the purpose of overflowing a small shop, with the owner of which they had quarrelled, Clive unhesitatingly threw his body into the gutter, and remained there till they had repaired their work of mischief.*

Such anecdotes are not likely to have been invented, though they would long ago have been forgotten, but for the celebrity of him, of whose daring and decided mind they gave such early proofs.

Clive, who, wherever he went, had the reputation of being a most unlucky boy, did not probably carry from school any great stock of acquired knowledge. He was impatient of control, and his application, in which, however, he was never deficient, was not directed to his books. This may have deceived those who measure a boy's talents by his progress in Latin and Greek. When in after-life he wrote to his father an account of his first successes, the remark of the old gentleman, who had probably been often fretted by his son's boyish waywardness, and neglect of his studies, was, "After all, the booby has sense."

He had, however, laid such a foundation at

* Mr. Gilbert Davis confirms this anecdote, as having been told him at Shrewsbury, upwards of forty years ago.

school, as enabled him, after his arrival at Madras, to employ to advantage the short leisure then accidentally afforded him, in that self-education, which, after all, is of all educations the most important. He seems at that later period to have revived his acquirements, when he felt that it was become necessary to apply them to practice in the concerns of life, and to have improved himself in some branches of useful knowledge in which he felt his deficiencies. Perhaps his progress in them was not the slower, that his proud mind felt that it was no longer watched by a master. But whatever may have been his book-learning, his character, even in the apparently thoughtless course of his schoolboy sports, was probably undergoing a training that had the strongest influence on his future success; and though to the common eye he seemed to be but indulging the youthful passion of excelling and leading his contemporaries in the trivial and passing pursuits that then formed the object of their common ambition, he was really, though unconsciously, by strengthening his active habits of firmness, perseverance, and self-possession, preparing himself for the more arduous undertakings that distinguished his future life.

Though Clive in his boyhood was idle, and impatient of control, he was, notwithstanding, an affectionate son and a kind brother; and he appears,

from his earliest communications with his family after he quitted England, to have had a mind imbued with good principles and feelings. He always retained a deep sense of religion: at no period of his life did he ever indulge in or sanction light or irreverent conversation on religious subjects. Like many other eminent men, he seems to have owed much to his mother, — a woman remarkable for her virtues and talents, and who is reported to have shown much tact and good sense in soothing and managing the hasty, and occasionally violent, temper of her husband.

Clive left England in 1743, and from a letter to his father, which unfortunately is imperfect, it would appear that he reached Madras late in 1744, after a long and dangerous passage, during the whole course of which, however, he enjoyed a perfect state of health. The ship was detained for nine months at the Brazils, and afterwards put into the Cape of Good Hope. His forced stay in Brazil enabled him to gain an easy command of the Portuguese language, which was afterwards of use to him; but the length of the passage, and especially the long continuance of the ship in harbour, made his extraordinary expenses greater than usual. This delay was also the cause of his missing the gentleman to whom he had been recommended at Madras, who in the interim had gone home; a circumstance

that made it necessary for him to incur a debt, for essential articles, to the captain in whose ship he went out, and of the extravagance of whose charges he complains, with apparent justice. This want of means, joined to the want of friends, made his situation at first rather uncomfortable. He returns warm and grateful thanks to his father for his kindness to him, especially in his education. The public servants at Madras he commends, as, in general, "a set of very prudent and industrious people;" but asks his father to use his influence to get him transferred to Bengal, as a more beneficial situation; or to use his interest to have him advanced to the rank of factor. Still, however, the young adventurer does not lose sight of his usual manly and independent habits of thinking, nor of his affectionate attachment to his friends: "I don't doubt," says he, "but you 'll make use of all possible means for my advancement. The world seems to be greatly debased of late, and interest carries it entirely before merit, especially in this service; tho' I should think myself very undeserving were I only to build my foundation on the strength of the former. I have been contriving a scheme concerning my cousin Bobby, but whether it may take effect, or my uncle care to intrust him to these parts, I am entirely at a loss to know. The Company keep two clergy-

men at this presidency: now, as there is a vacancy for one of them, if you could get him elected for this place, I cannot foresee any better provision can be made for him in England." He describes the allowances of the clergy, and leaves the decision to his father's judgment. The whole of the last part of this letter being lost, we are left in the dark as to its date, and such other particulars as he may have communicated.

This defect is in part supplied by a letter to his uncle, Mr. Bayley, which has been fortunately preserved*, and in which he describes the feelings, so natural to a young man of ardent affections, far from his friends and from home, who turns with longing to the scenes of infancy and youth. After apologising for his delay in writing, he proceeds: — "I shall always retain a due sense of gratitude for the many obligations and favours you have laid me under; and the pleasant and delightful days I have spent with my kind relations and friends in Lancashire refreshes and entertains my mind with very agreeable ideas. I must confess, at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner; however, knowing it to be for my own welfare, I rest content and

* Dated Fort St. George, Dec. 10. 1744.

patient, wishing the views for which my father sent me here may, in all respects, be fully accomplished. If I should be so far blest as to revisit again my own country, but more especially Manchester (the centre of all my wishes), all that I could hope or desire for would be presented before me in one view."

In a letter to one of his cousins, written in February, 1745, he indulges in a strain of sentiment, so natural, and so creditable to a youthful mind, and gives so lively an idea of his feelings of loneliness, that a pretty large extract from it may not be considered as here misplaced: —

"DEAR COUSIN,

"The want of a proper conveyance is the only plea I can offer for not addressing you sooner. It is a long time since I enjoyed the pleasure of your company and conversation, and as both parties have been equally culpable, I beg that from henceforth the strictest amity may subsist between us. The bond of friendship, especially when united by the ties of blood, ought not to be dissolved on any consideration whatever; and I believe you 'll agree with me, that the only effectual means to preserve it entire must be by letters, since the vast ocean which divides us so far asunder won't admit of it by word of mouth, and which I heartily wish

may turn out to the mutual satisfaction of both of us. If there is any thing which may properly be called happiness here below, I am persuaded it is in the union of two friends, who love each other without the least guile or deceit, who are united by a real inclination, and satisfied with each other's merit: their hearts are full, and leave no vacancy for any other passion: they enjoy perpetual tranquillity, because they enjoy content." After laying his past omissions on the thoughtlessness of youth, and excusing himself for not describing the country, as so many histories give a much more correct idea of it than he could, after so short a residence, he continues: — "I shall only add, that the intemperance of the climate, together with the excessive heat of the sun, are very noxious to our health; and I really think the advantages which accrue to us here, are greatly overbalanced by the sacrifices we make of our constitutions. I have not been unacquainted with the fickleness of fortune, and may safely say I have not enjoyed one happy day since I left my native country. I am not acquainted with any one family in the place, and have not assurance enough to introduce myself without being asked. If the state I am now in will admit of any happiness, it must be when I am writing to my friends. Letters surely were first invented for the comfort of such

solitary wretches as myself. Having lost the substantial pleasure of seeing them, I shall in some measure compensate this loss, by the satisfaction I shall find in their writings. When you write me, I beg it may be carelessly, and without study, for I had much rather read the dictates of the heart than those of the understanding. The pacquet is just now going to be closed, which hastens me to a conclusion sooner than I designed. I desire you to tender my duty to my uncle and aunt, love to my cousins, and service to all friends; and it will greatly add to the obligations of him, who esteems it his greatest happiness to be thought

"Your kind and loving Cousin,

"ROBT. CLIVE."

Fort St. George, Feb. 16th, 1744–5.

These letters, though their rather laboured and incorrect style indicates the writer to have then had little practice in epistolary correspondence, show, however, the more essential qualities of excellent principles and an affectionate heart. His spirits seem already tinged by that melancholy which occasionally attended him through life. It is a curious, and not uninstructive sight, to observe the man who, in a few years, was to raise himself by his commanding talents and heroic daring, to an acknowledged

pre-eminence above all his countrymen in the East, for several months after his first touching on the shores of that country, the scene of his future glory, acknowledging that he knew not one family in it, and shrinking with a sensitive diffidence from the exertion of introducing himself. Though affectionate, he was wayward and reserved. From this time till 1746, when Madras was taken, there are no accounts of him, except some anecdotes, tending to prove that he was very ill suited to the condition of life in which he was placed. His impatience of control, and wayward and impracticable firmness, never forsook him. On one occasion it appears that his conduct to the secretary under whom the writers were placed on their first arrival, was so inconsistent with the rules of official discipline, that the governor, to whom it was reported, commanded him to ask that gentleman's pardon. With this order he complied rather ungraciously; but the secretary immediately after, before his irritation had time to subside, having invited him to dinner, — "No, Sir," replied Clive, "the governor did not command me to *dine* with you."* He is stated to have hazarded, on more than one occasion, the loss of the service by acts of wildness: and a story was long current that, either in a fit of despair, or of low

* Biog. Brit. art. CLIVE.

spirits, to which he was subject from his earliest years, he made, at this period, an attempt upon his own life. A companion, coming into his room in Writers' Buildings, was requested to take up a pistol and fire it out of the window: he did so. Clive, who was sitting in a very gloomy mood, sprang up, and exclaimed — "Well, I am reserved for something! That pistol," said he to his astonished friend, "I have twice snapped at my own head." This is not unlikely to be true, nor is its probability contradicted, by his never having spoken of it to any of his family after his return to England. But, while he properly threw a veil over the more violent ebullitions of his youth, he was fond of recurring to every act of early kindness which had been shown to him; and amongst these, he considered as one of the most important, his admission, soon after his arrival in India, into an excellent library belonging to the Governor of Madras. He now devoted much of his leisure to study, and there can be little doubt that it was at this time he laid the foundation of that knowledge, which was so soon to surprise and benefit his country.

When Madras was taken by the French Admiral La Bourdonnais (A. D. 1746), Clive became a prisoner of war, and like others gave his parole. It was agreed by the articles of capitulation that

the English should surrender themselves prisoners of war; that the town should, in the first instance, be given up, but should be ransomed; and M. de la Bourdonnais gave his promise that he would settle the ransom on easy and moderate terms.* Dupleix, however, who was then at Pondicherry, ever at variance with the Admiral, insisted that Madras should be rased to the ground, and called upon the English officers to renew their parole to a governor whom he appointed. This infraction of the terms of capitulation was viewed with indignation by all, and construed into a release from the engagement into which they had entered. De la Bourdonnais, with regret, found himself unable to fulfil the conditions stipulated†; and Clive, accompanied by his friend Mr. Edmund Maskelyne, contrived, in the disguise of a native, to escape to Fort St. David.

Soon after his arrival at this place, he was engaged in a duel with an officer, to whom he had lost some money at cards, but who, with his companion, was clearly proved to have played unfairly. Clive was not the only loser; but the others were terrified into payment by the threats of those who had won their money. This example had no effect on him; he persisted in refusing to pay, and was called out by one of them

* Orme, vol. i. p. 68. † Ibid. pp. 70, 71.

who deemed himself insulted by his conduct. They met without seconds: Clive fired, and missed his antagonist, who immediately came close up to him, and held the pistol to his head, desiring him to ask his life, with which he complied. The next demand was, to recant his assertions respecting unfair play. On compliance with this being refused, his opponent threatened to shoot him. "Fire, and be d—d," said the dauntless young man; "I said you cheated; I say so still, and I will never pay you." The astonished officer threw away his pistol, saying, Clive was mad. The latter received from his young companions many compliments for the spirit he had shown; but he not only declined coming forward against the officer with whom he had fought, but never afterwards spoke of his behaviour at the card-table. "He has given me my life," he said, "and though I am resolved on never paying money which was unfairly won, or again associating with him, I shall never do him an injury."*

Clive, when at Madras, had, as before stated, access to the governor's library, and, according to his own account, this opportunity of improving himself was not neglected; but what-

* Biographia Britannica (2d edit.), art. CLIVE, written by Henry Beaufoy, Esq. M. P., from family papers and information: see also, Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary.

ever knowledge he might have attained, his general habits appear to have continued the same; and it is probable these might have arrested his progress to distinction, had not the occurrence of a war with the French led to his adopting a profession, for which he was by disposition infinitely better fitted than for that which he abandoned.

Clive sought for and obtained an ensign's commission in the army in 1747, and was present with the troops with which Admiral Boscawen, in 1748, made an unsuccessful attack on Pondicherry. The young soldier became at once distinguished for his activity and forward gallantry. It is probable, however, that from having been a civilian, he was at first viewed with jealousy by his military companions. We are told that on one occasion, when an anxiety to obtain ammunition for the battery where he was posted led him, instead of sending a serjeant or corporal, to run himself to bring it, a remark was made, which implied that it was fear, not zeal, which caused him to leave his post at such a moment. This remark was repeated to Clive, who [redacted] stantly went to the person by whom it was made, to insist upon a distinct acknowledgment or disavowal of the slander.* The latter was attempted, but not to his satisfaction, and a challenge ensued. As they were retiring to settle

this dispute, his opponent, irritated by some circumstance, struck him. Clive instantly drew his sword, but they were prevented fighting by persons who witnessed the transaction. A court of inquiry was held on their conduct, and the officer who had defamed Clive was ordered to ask his pardon in front of the battalion to which they belonged. The court, however, having taken no notice of the blow, Clive, when the service was over, insisted on satisfaction for that unpardonable insult. On this being refused, he waved his cane over the head of his antagonist, telling him he was too contemptible a coward to be beaten. The day after this transaction the person he had so disgraced resigned his commission.*

No one of these early disputes with his brother officers can be traced to a perverse† or quarrelsome temper. Clive appears in all to have been the party offended. The resolute manner in which he resented the injuries done to him raised his reputation for courage, and no doubt protected him from further insult and outrage.

* Biographia Britannica (2d edit.), art. CLIVE.

† Mr. Mill in his History of India (vol. iii. p. 105.), in reference to these early occurrences of Clive's life, describes him, at this period, as of a turbulent disposition; but the justice of the application of such an epithet is not borne out by the facts.

From the date of Clive's entering the army till the year 1756, we have no letters or papers of his own that can throw any light upon this active and eventful period of his life; but the deficiency is well supplied by the plain narrative of the gallant commander* under whom he served, and by an able writer†, who dwells upon the development of his character and his early exploits, with all the interest which their local importance was calculated to inspire in one, who, to his high qualifications as an historian, added the fullest acquaintance with the scenes and persons he so well describes.

A prince of the name of Sahojee, who had seven years before lost the throne of Tanjore, came to Fort St. David to solicit the English to restore him. He represented his title to the throne as just, and affirmed that he had numerous and powerful adherents, who would come forward the moment they saw him supported; but what had most weight with the gentlemen at Fort St. David was his offer to cede Devecotta, a town situated near the mouth of the Coleroon, the possession of which, it was thought, would prove most advantageous to the trade of the Company on the coast of Coromandel. The first expedition, which was sent under the command of Captain Cope, was early com-

* Colonel Lawrence's Narrative.

† Orme, War in Hindustan.

pelled to return, from the difficulties of the country and want of provisions: and the report of the commander described Sahojee as being totally destitute of those adherents of whom he had boasted.

The failure of this expedition served only to stimulate to another effort those who had the management of the Company's affairs. It was indispensable, they thought, to repair the disgrace incurred by a retreat before the troops of a native state, but they so far paid attention to the information given by Captain Cope, as to determine that the capture of Devecotta, not the restoration of Sahojee, should be their first object.

The second expedition, consisting of 800 Europeans and 1,500 sepoys, which was placed under the command of Major Lawrence, succeeded in taking Devecotta, and in making a treaty with the rajah of Tanjore, who ceded that fort with a small portion of territory to the Company, granting at the same time 4,000 rupees per mensem to the fugitive prince whose cause they had adopted, on condition that he was not again to disturb the peace of the country.

Clive, who had received the commission of a lieutenant, was on this service: he solicited Major Lawrence to allow him to lead the storm of the embankment thrown up to defend the breach: his request was readily complied with,

for his reputation for gallantry stood high. Exposed to a severe fire, he passed with some difficulty a rivulet, with a design of taking the enemy's works in flank: the sepoys were in the rear, but part of them only crossed the rivulet, and these did not close up with the Europeans, who, as they were presenting their muskets to fire, were charged in the rear by a party of horse who were within forty yards, protected and concealed between the projecting towers of the fort. This attack was at once so rapid and impetuous that in an instant twenty-six of the platoon were cut down: four had been killed by the fire of the fort, and four only of the party remained alive. Clive, who narrowly escaped being cut down by the sabre of one of the horsemen, ran towards the sepoys, whom he found drawn up in good order. Their appearance checked the Tanjore horse, who, satisfied with their success, returned to the station from whence they had made their onset. Major Lawrence, on seeing what had occurred, advanced to the assault at the head of all the Europeans of his force, and was soon master of the fort. This event was soon followed by a treaty of peace with the king of Tanjore. (A. D. 1749.)

We have already seen how Anwar-u-Deen became possessed of his power in the Carnatic. The military chiefs, however, and the principal

inhabitants of that country gave a reluctant obedience to his authority. The family of the former nabob continued to be popular; but the difficulty was to find a representative fit to contend for the government. The brother of Mahommed Saeed was yet too young, and Mortaza Ali, governor of Vellore, was deemed too cowardly and treacherous to merit elevation. All eyes were turned towards Chunda Sahib, who continued to linger in a Mahratta prison. He was a soldier of approved conduct and valour, and the generosity of his disposition recommended him to all classes. But, as the solicitude for his release increased, the demand of the Mahrattas for his ransom rose. The ambition of Dupleix at last ended all difficulties. This bold and able statesman saw no prospect of the French maintaining themselves in India through the profits of their limited commerce; but his acquaintance with the divided interests of the native princes led him to hope, that if he entered upon the arena of their politics, with a popular, if not a good cause, he might anticipate splendid and profitable results. He determined, therefore, to aid Chunda Sahib, with whose family, which had remained at Pondicherry, he made the necessary arrangement for his release. A sum of seven lacs of rupees was guaranteed to the Mahrattas as his ransom, and

he left his prison, accompanied by a small party of horse. But fearing to enter the Carnatic with so few followers, he sought employment, in the hope of increasing their numbers. The first contest in which he engaged was most unfortunate. In a battle in which he aided the rajah of Chittledroog against the ranee (or queen) of Bednore, his son was killed, and himself made a prisoner; but, falling into the hands of some Mahommedan officers, he persuaded them not only to release him, but to join his standard on an expedition to Adoni, to unite with Muzuffer Jung, the son of a favourite daughter of Nizam-ul-Mulk, who, on the death of that prince, had entered the lists to contend for the sovereignty of the Deckan against six of his uncles, each of whom was aspiring to the same high station.

Chunda Sahib was received with a cordial welcome, and he advised Muzuffer Jung to proceed instantly to the Carnatic, stating the strength and reputation he would gain by giving a nabob to that country, and promising to obtain the aid of a French corps to establish his own title in the Deckan. The proposal was immediately adopted. A body of 400 Europeans and 2000 sepoys joined from Pondicherry, and in the first battle, which was fought near Amboor, Anwar-u-Deen was slain. The French

corps greatly distinguished themselves in this action, and above all Bussy, who on this day displayed to the admiring Mahommedan chiefs that valour and skill which laid the foundation of the merited fame he afterwards acquired.

Muzuffer Jung, after this victory, assumed all the state of subadar of the Deckan; and his first act was to issue a patent to his friend Chunda Sahib, appointing him nabob of the Carnatic. Much valuable time was lost by these chiefs in vain ceremonies at Arcot, and in a visit to Pondicherry, where they were received and treated in a magnificent manner by Dupleix.

(1749.) Maphuze Khan, the eldest son of Anwar-u-Deen, had been made prisoner on the day his father was killed; but Mahommed Ali, his younger brother, fled to Trichinopoly, from whence he strongly, but at first vainly, solicited the English for aid. The committee at Fort St. David saw too clearly the development of the great plans of Dupleix, nor were they ignorant that the success of these plans must involve the ruin of the interests of which they had charge. But they had not, like Dupleix, foreseen the events which were to occur, and had received no orders from England that could justify their entering upon a scene of extended operations; nor could they with a good grace remonstrate

against the proceedings of the French. Their own conduct in aiding a pretender to the petty principality of Tanjore, though the object was comparatively insignificant, was not very dissimilar in mode, and as unjustifiable in principle, as the support given by Dupleix to Muzuffer Jung. Besides these reasons for temporary inaction, the English were anxious to repossess Madras, and the period fixed for its delivery by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had arrived. The French gave it up with the fortifications much improved; but those of Fort St. David in the meanwhile had been much more so, and the Directors commanded that it should henceforward be deemed the superior settlement.

The English authorities had some time before entered into a correspondence with Nizam-ul-Mulk, through his son Nasir Jung; and Admiral Griffin had called upon the subadar of the Deckan to exercise his authority in the dependant province of Arcot, in order to obtain reparation for the injuries they had sustained, particularly by the capture of Madras. This communication had been favourably received, and orders had been sent to Anwar-u-Deen to redress the evils of which the English complained; but these orders met with little or no attention.*

* This inattention to orders is referred by some native agents of the company to the parsimony of the English

The intercourse, however, which had been established with Nasir Jung was now revived; and when that prince, who had been proclaimed the successor to his father, marched towards the Carnatic to reduce his nephew Muzuffer Jung, and summoned Mahommed Ali to his standard, who carried with him 6000 of his own followers and a small body of English, the latter were, at Nasir Jung's request, reinforced by a body of 600 Europeans under Major Lawrence.

Nasir Jung, pleased with these proofs of allegiance and support, proclaimed Mahommed Ali Nabob of the Carnatic, with whose fortunes those of the English became from that day intimately associated. An able author *, well qualified from the extent and accuracy of his observation to decide upon the true character of the events he describes, has justly ridiculed the attempts which have been made to defend the sacred right of inheritance claimed by any one of the candidates for power that now appeared upon the stage. The authority of the Emperor of Delhi over the south of India, during the long life of Nizam-ul-Mulk, had been merely nominal. Nasir Jung rested his right of succession to his father on the

governor, in not making presents to the nabob, which was contrasted with the liberality of Dupleix, who well knew how to gain his objects at such courts.

* Colonel Wilks.

falsely assumed pretext of his elder brother* having, in pursuit of his schemes of ambition at Delhi, resigned the office of subadar of the Deckan. Muzuffer Jung *asserted* his claim on a pretended will of his grandfather Nizam-ul-Mulk: no proof was ever given of the existence of such a will; and if it did exist, it never could, according to Indian law or usage, be pleaded to the exclusion of the sons of that prince. Mahommed Ali claimed the title of nabob, to the exclusion of his elder brother Maphuze Khan, by virtue of a promise of Nizam-ul-Mulk, now confirmed by the act of his son Nasir Jung; while Chunda Sahib put forward no claims beyond his own character, his near connection with the respected family of Saadet Ali, and the right of Muzuffer Jung, while exercising the power of subadar of the Deckan, to appoint whom he chose to be Nabob of Arcot.

These various pretensions, alike groundless as matters of right, were about to be referred to the sword, which alone could decide claims of such a character. The troops of the rival trading companies of England and France, though these nations were at peace, stood arrayed as mercenaries in the opposing ranks of Indian princes. Each endeavoured to cast the

* Ghazee-u-Deen.

blame upon the other, as the cause of this hostility; but it is sufficiently obvious, that whatever pretext the English might have afforded by their petty unjustifiable attack upon Tanjore, they could not remain neuter when Dupleix took the part he did in Indian politics, without the imminent hazard of being deprived of all their privileges, if not expelled from their possessions on the coast of Coromandel. The great error they committed was, not to have foreseen the crisis which had now occurred, and not to have prevented Admiral Boscawen from returning to England, leaving them every way inferior in strength, both by land and sea, to their formidable opponents.

Muzuffer Jung and Chunda Sahib had wasted that time which should have been given to the attack of Trichinopoly, in levying tribute from the Rajah of Tanjore, who was also compelled to give a sum of money *, and to make cession of territory to the French. Alarmed at the rapid advance of Nasir Jung, they hastened to Pondicherry, where they were reinforced by Dupleix, who, besides an advance of money, increased the French contingent to 2000 Europeans, a large body of sepoys, and a well-served train of artil-

* Two lacs of rupees were given to the French, and eighty-one villages were ceded belonging to Karical, which place the French had seized in 1736, and built a fort there.

lery (A. D. 1750). This formidable corps gave every promise of success to Muzuffer Jung, whose army, having strongly entrenched themselves, waited the attack of their opponents with the fullest confidence of ultimate success. Their position was so excellent, that Major Lawrence advised Nasir Jung against an attack, but that prince replied, "That it did not become the son of Nizam-ul-Mulk to retreat before such an enemy: he would," he said, "attack them in front." A cannonade took place the same day, and a general action was expected to ensue; but the French corps was suddenly disorganised by the resignation of no less than thirteen commissioned officers, who had been for some time discontented, and who disgraced themselves by abandoning the standard of their country at the very moment of action; at a period, too, when every personal consideration should have been sacrificed at the shrine of national glory, and when private interest should have given way before the public welfare. This mutiny (for such it was) appeared likely to spread, and the French commander was compelled to retreat towards Pondicherry. The defection of the corps on which they so much relied defeated all the hopes of Chunda Sahib and Muzuffer Jung. The former, with his adherents, accompanied the French corps; while the latter, fearing the disper-

sion or desertion of his army, hastened to throw himself on the mercy of his uncle, who proffered every kindness, but who, the moment he had him in his power, threw him into prison.

Dupleix evinced upon this occasion, that his was a character not to be depressed by reverses. He punished the guilty officers, brought to trial the commandant for retreating without orders, and took every step that could restore the discipline and efficiency of the French troops, or give spirit and confidence to their allies and adherents. The vain and dissolute Nasir Jung took little advantage of his success. A refusal to grant to his English allies a tract of territory near Madras, — the promised reward of their assistance,— induced Major Lawrence to return with his corps to Fort St. David; while the French, who had in part redeemed their reputation by a successful attack on a portion of the subadar's army, and by the capture of Masulipatam, now ventured to support Chunda Sahib in more extended operations against the principal strong-holds in the Carnatic. Mahommed Ali earnestly entreated the aid of the English to defend his newly-acquired territory, representing the ruin which must attend their affairs on the success of the French. This aid was granted, on his consenting to pay the troops, but the failure in his engagements, and the weak and cowardly character of his military

operations, led to its being withdrawn. He was soon afterwards defeated by the French, who followed up this success by one of still greater importance,—the capture by storm of Gingee, an almost inaccessible hill fortress.

The manner in which the works of a stronghold, hitherto deemed impregnable, were successively carried by Bussy, to whose valour and military skill the arduous task was assigned, struck awe into the natives of India, and was viewed by Europeans with astonishment. It had not been discovered (as it has since been by frequent similar successes in India), that where men rely upon steep and high mountains, and rugged or scarped rocks, as defences, other means and advantages are neglected; and if the assailants overcome those natural obstacles which have been deemed insuperable, the spirit of the defenders is gone, and they seldom, if ever, offer that bold and determined resistance, which the same troops have been found to do in half-walled towns, or villages, where, from the first, they could confide in nothing but their own firmness and courage.

The success of the French, but particularly their last exploit, roused Nasir Jung from that dream of security into which he had fallen. He recalled that part of his army which he had sent to Golconda, and commenced a correspondence with Dupleix. That able man, while he carried on

a negotiation with this prince, had established a communication with some of the principal persons * in his camp, who, when their plot against him was matured, were to summon to their aid a French force of 4000 men encamped near Gingee. The treaty which Dupleix pretended a desire to negotiate was signed by Nasir Jung on the same day the conspirators sent in the concerted summons; but the latter reached its destination first, and the French force, under M. Delatouche, moved before day-light next morning to commence their attack on the camp of the subadar. They were opposed by the troops which remained firm to their duty; but the action was soon decided by Nasir Jung's death. The unsuspecting prince had repaired to the lines of the Patan chiefs, with the view of exciting them to exertion; but, as he raised himself on the seat of his elephant to salute the Nabob of Kurpa, two carabine balls pierced his body, and he instantly expired. His head stuck upon a spear, announced his fate to the army.

* The Patan Nabobs of Kurpa, Karnoul, and Savanore were the chief persons in the conspiracy. They were discontented at the treatment they received from Nasir Jung. They were joined by Shandraz Khan, and other high officers of that prince. These latter are stated to have considered themselves disgraced by the imprisonment of Muzuffer Jung, whose submission they had obtained by the most sacred pledges of his being kindly treated.

Muzuffer Jung was released, and by nine o'clock of the same morning was, without opposition, installed as subadar of the Deckan, although no fewer than four brothers of the deceased were in camp.*

Dupleix had evinced throughout these extraordinary scenes a mixture of European and Asiatic character, which marked him as the fittest of all instruments for a government which cherished a wish, as it appears the French did at this period, to obtain, through the influence of alliances with native states, the superiority over all their European rivals in India; and gained, as he merited, a rich reward from Muzuffer Jung, both by a share in the treasures of the late subadar, and by a commission which constituted him governor over all the countries south of the Kistna; making Chunda Saheb his deputy of Arcot.

After all engagements were completed, the new subadar commenced his march towards Hyderabad, accompanied by a force of 300 Europeans, and 2000 sepoys. The French troops had, by their recent conduct, established with the natives of India a high military reputation, the maintenance of which could not have been entrusted to abler hands than those of Bussy, who was nominated to the command of the subsidiary force

* Wilks, vol. i. p. 269.

with Muzuffer Jung. That prince, however, was not destined long to enjoy the happy turn of his fortune. The Patan nabobs who raised him to the throne, cherished expectations which he could not gratify; and their turbulent spirit, not brooking delay, broke out into rebellion. In an attempt to reduce the insurgents, Muzuffer Jung was slain. The disastrous consequences which this event was likely to produce, were averted by the judgment and decision of Bussy, who instantly proclaimed Salabut Jung (the eldest of the imprisoned sons of Nizam-ul-Mulk) Subadar of the Deckan. That prince, grateful for his unexpected elevation, confirmed all the engagements which his nephew had contracted with Dupleix, and the army continued its march to Hyderabad.

It has been necessary to say thus much regarding the different princes of the Deckan, from their connexion with the scenes which took place in the Carnatic, and which it would be impossible to understand without the explanations which have been given.

For the present, we leave Bussy and his force to the prosecution of the first great enterprise of an European power in the interior of India. The detail of the remarkable scene of warfare and of politics which awaited that extraordinary man, in the territories of Hyderabad, is foreign to the object of this memoir. We return, therefore, to

the narration of events in the Carnatic, which becomes a more pleasing task, as our countrymen now ceased to be eclipsed, as they had hitherto been, by the brilliant characters both of the French military commanders and statesmen.

CHAP. II.

(A. D. 1750.) THE government of Fort St. David had been assumed by Mr. Saunders, a man of sound sense and unconquerable firmness. Nothing could be more alarming than the situation in which he found the affairs of the Company. He saw immediately, that, unless Mahommed Ali was effectually supported, the Carnatic would fall into the possession of Chunda Sahib, from whom the Company could expect no favour; and the probability of this happening was greater, from the recent success of that chief, in obtaining possession of Madura, which literally confined Mahommed Ali to the single possession of Trichinopoly; almost every other place having acknowledged the authority of his rival. The government of Fort St. David had sent to the aid of Mahommed Ali a body of 600 men under Captain Cope; but the failure of an attempt made by this party to recover Madura depressed still more the spirits of the adherents of their ally, who was soon besieged by the united forces of Chunda Sahib and the French. This desperate state of his fortunes led to the renewal of his efforts to

obtain more efficient aid from the English, to whom he not only offered a considerable territory contiguous to Madras, but agreed to pay the expenses of all the troops employed in his support. These offers, and the certain ruin in which the success of Chunda Sahib must involve the Company, would hardly have roused the Committee of Fort St. David, unauthorised as they were by their instructions from England, to depart from their neutrality, had not Dupleix insulted their forbearance by planting white flags, (to denote that they were French property) in almost every field * around their boundary, and some even within their limits.

The English troops on the coast were, at this period, much inferior in numbers to the French; and by an inexplicable confidence in the continuance of peace, Colonel Lawrence, whose character and experience constituted a great part of their military strength, had been permitted to return to England on private affairs. Notwithstanding these circumstances, Mr. Saunders determined to make an attempt to relieve Trichinopoly; and a body of 500 Europeans, 100 Caffres, and 1000 sepoys was detached under Captain Gingen, to join the party already in that garrison. Their march was delayed seve-

* Orme vol. i. p. 171

ral weeks, to allow them to be joined by a party of Mahommed Ali's troops, the Committee being desirous to avoid appearing as principals in this war; choosing, like the French, rather to have their forces considered as mercenaries in the pay of the native prince whom they supported.

Clive, who had alternately been charged with civil and military duties, as the exigencies of the public service required, had resumed the civil branch of the service, soon after the reduction of Devecotta (A. D. 1749), when the pacification with the Rajah of Tanjore produced a temporary cessation from military operations; and was admitted to the same rank that he would have held, had he never quitted it. By the active friendship of Major Lawrence, he was appointed commissary for supplying the European troops with provisions. He had not been long settled at Madras, when a fever of the nervous kind attacked his constitution, and so much affected his spirits, that the constant presence of an attendant became necessary. For this complaint, which was accompanied with a hard swelling at the pit of his stomach, he went to Bengal during the cold season, and returned with his health much improved; but the hardship and fatigue which he soon after underwent in the field, while his health was yet imperfectly re-established, tended so much to shake his constitution, that,

during the remainder of his life, except when his mind was actively engaged, the oppression on his spirits frequently returned.* In his official capacity of commissary, he now proceeded with Captain Gingen to Trichinopoly. (A. D. 1751, May.) As he did not then hold any station as a soldier, no share can be attributed to him in the disgraceful affair at Volconda†, where the British troops were discomfited, more by the irresolution and want of judgment of their officers ‡, than by the efforts or ability of their adversaries.

They retreated to Trichinopoly, pursued and harassed by the enemy, of whom there appears to have been such a dread, that they did not even occupy the pagoda of Seringham §, though the strength of that post, and its vicinity to Trichinopoly, rendered it as tenable as it was important. It was instantly taken possession of by the French, and their ally Chunda Sahib, who thus, under the most favourable auspices, commenced their operations on a scene destined to be that of their ultimate defeat. There were

* Biog. Brit. art. CLIVE, p. 649.

† Orme, vol. i. p. 173.

‡ Captain Gingen had on this occasion recourse to a council of war, whose hesitation spread alarm among the troops. Orme, vol. i. p. 180.

§ The island of Seringham lies between the Coleroon and Caveri. It is famous for the pagoda from which it derives its name.

at this period so few English officers of any experience, that the governor was compelled to send one of the members of council (Mr. Pigot), a man of known firmness and judgment, in charge of some recruits and stores to Trichinopoly. Clive, who had returned to Fort St. David, from Volconda, accompanied this party. On their way back from this service, these two gentlemen, who had an escort of but twelve sepoys, were attacked by a body of polygars, who with matchlocks harassed them in their march for some hours, and killed seven of the sepoys; when, the ammunition of the survivors being expended, they were ordered to disperse, and Mr. Pigot and Clive only saved themselves by the fleetness of their horses. Another small reinforcement was sent soon afterwards through Tanjore, in charge of Clive, promoted on this occasion to the rank of captain, which, after a sharp affair with a French detachment, succeeded in reaching Trichinopoly in safety. But Clive, on his return from that place, drew such a picture of the situation of the garrison, that the governor was satisfied the cause of Mahommed Ali could be saved only by efforts more considerable than any that had been yet made. Clive suggested, that, as Chunda Sahib had drawn away almost all his forces to invest Trichinopoly, an attack should be made upon his capital (Arcot). This sug-

gestion was adopted; and he was, at his own request, nominated to the conduct of an enterprise, which, whether we consider the means employed, the obstacles to be surmounted, or the results that were produced, must ever rank high in the list of those achievements, where skill and energy supply the place of numbers; and, mocking every calculation, compel fortune, however reluctant, to pay homage to superior genius. But the capture and defence of Arcot forms too important a feature in the life of Clive to be slightly passed over; and as no man can ever give so clear and so eloquent a relation of this operation as the historian*, who may almost be called an eye-witness of the actions he so admirably described, no apology is necessary for adopting his narrative; which, in its very minuteness, is as interesting as it is instructive; and, while it conveys a lesson to the mere European soldier, paints in true and vivid colours all that belongs to the character of the yet unimproved system of Asiatic warfare.

"The English battalion at Trichinopoly," says Orme, "did not exceed 600 men; whereas the French had 900, and the troops of Chunda Sahib outnumbered the Nabob's ten to one. The strength of the city, indeed, rendered the reduc-

* Orme.

tion of it very difficult; but the Nabob's army, at the same time that they were incapable of retrieving his affairs, exhausted his treasures, and his revenues were daily cut off by the enemy taking possession of the countries which furnished them.

"Captain Clive, on his return from Trichinopoly in the beginning of August, represented this situation of affairs to the Presidency, and proposed, as the only resource, to attack the possessions of Chunda Sahib in the territory of Arcot; offering to lead the expedition himself, which, he doubted not, would cause a diversion of part of the enemy's force from Trichinopoly. Fort St. David and Madras were left, the one with 100, the other with less than 50 men, in order to supply the greatest force that could be collected for this enterprise. The detachment, when completed, nevertheless, consisted of no more than 300 sepoys and 200 Europeans, with eight officers, six of whom had never before been in action; and four of these six were young men in the mercantile service of the Company, who, inflamed by his example, took up the sword to follow him. This handful of men, with only three field-pieces for their artillery, marched from Madras on the 26th of August, and on the 29th arrived at Conjeveram, a considerable town, with a large pagoda, lying about forty miles inland, where they received intelli-

gence that the fort of Arcot was garrisoned by 1100 men; on which Captain Clive wrote word to Madras, desiring that two eighteen-pounders might be sent after him without any delay. On the 31st he halted within ten miles of Arcot, where the enemy's spies reported, that they had discovered the English marching with unconcern through a violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain: and this circumstance, from their notions of omens, gave the garrison so high an opinion of the fortitude of the approaching enemy, that they instantly abandoned the fort, and a few hours after the English entered the city, which had no walls or defences, and marching through 100,000 spectators, who gazed on them with admiration and respect, took possession of the fort, in which they found a large quantity of lead and gunpowder, with eight pieces of cannon, from four to eight-pounders. The merchants had, for security, deposited in the fort effects to the value of 50,000*l.*; but these were punctually restored to the owners; and this judicious abstemiousness conciliated many of the principal inhabitants to the English interest. The fort was inhabited by 3000 or 4000 persons, who, at their own request, were permitted to remain in their dwellings.

"Captain Clive made it his first care to col-

lect such provisions and materials as might enable him to sustain a siege; and foreseeing that the enemy would soon recover from their flight and return into the town, if he confined himself to the fort, determined to go in quest of them; and on the 4th of September marched out with the greatest part of his men and four field-pieces. In the afternoon he discovered the fugitive garrison, consisting of 600 horse and 500 foot, drawn up near Timery, a fort situated six miles south-west of the city. They had a field-piece managed by two or three Europeans, from which they fired at a great distance, and killed a camel and wounded a sepoy; but as soon as they saw the English within musket-shot, retreated to the hills in the rear; upon which the English returned to the fort.

"The troops marched out again on the 6th, and found the enemy drawn up within gun-shot of Timery, in a grove, enclosed with a bank and a ditch, about fifty yards in front of which was a large tank, surrounded likewise with a bank much higher than that of the grove; but by age and neglect the tank itself was almost choked up and dry. Their number now appeared to be 2000, and they had two field-pieces, which fired smartly as the English advanced, and killed three Europeans; on which accident the line advanced more briskly towards the enemy, who,

frightened by the vivacity of their approach, did not think themselves safe in the grove, but hurried with precipitation into the tank, and began to fire from the banks, exposing so little of their bodies that the English fire did no execution amongst them, whilst theirs wounded several of the Europeans and sepoys. The troops were ordered, therefore, to move behind some neighbouring buildings, from which Ensign Glass was soon after detached with a platoon of forty men to attack one side of the tank, whilst another, under the command of Lieutenant Bulkley, pushed to attack the enemy in front. Both gained the banks, and gave their fire at the same instant amongst numbers crowded together in the tank, which immediately put them to flight. The troops then took possession of the village under the walls of the fort, and summoned the governor. Messages passed, during which his spies discovered that the English had no battering cannon, which intelligence determined him not to surrender. Several shells were therefore thrown into the fort from a cohorn mortar, which proved ineffectual. The troops marched back to Arcot, and the enemy's cavalry hovered round them as they retreated, but kept out of the reach of their fire.

"The garrison remained in the fort ten days, diligently employed in many necessary works;

and the enemy, now augmented to 3000 men, imputing this intermission of their sallies to fear, encamped within three miles of the town, giving out that they intended to besiege the fort. Captain Clive determined to take advantage of their security; and on the 14th of September marched out two hours after midnight, with the greatest part of his garrison, and entering their camp by surprise, found them, as he expected, asleep. The troops beat up the camp from one end to the other, firing continually on numbers taking flight on all sides with shrieks and confusion. The terror was so great that very few made use of their arms, and even those few, after a single discharge made at random, mingled with the rest of the fugitives; and when the day broke, none of them remained in sight. This success was obtained without the loss of a man.

"The two eighteen-pounders, which had been demanded from Madras, with some military stores, were at this time on the road, but escorted only by a few sepoys; and the enemy, hoping to intercept them, sent a large detachment, which took possession of the great pagoda of Conjeveram. Thirty Europeans and fifty sepoys, with a field-piece, were sent from the fort to dislodge them, and, on their arrival found the pagoda abandoned; the enemy having retreated to a fort in the neighbourhood, where they were

continually reinforced from the main body. Much depending on the safe arrival of the convoy, Captain Clive, reserving only thirty Europeans and fifty sepoys for the guard of the fort, sent all the rest to strengthen the detachment which escorted it. On this the enemy changed their design, and returned hastily to the city, in expectation that an assault, made on the fort during the absence of a great part of the garrison, would encourage the inhabitants to rise; and, in this confidence, their whole force, horse and foot, advanced as soon as it was dark, and surrounded the fort. Their musketry, from the adjacent houses, kept a continual fire upon the ramparts; and this attack producing no effect, a large body of horse and foot advanced promiscuously to the outer gate, endeavouring, by outcries, and the noise of their military music, to confound the attention of the garrison, from which they sustained several discharges of musketry without quitting their ground. At last some grenades were thrown amongst them, the explosion of which, frightening the horses, flung their cavalry into such confusion that they galloped away, trampling over the foot: but within an hour they recovered their spirits, and made such another attack at the other gate, where they were received and beaten off as at the first. Their infantry continued their fire until day-

break, when the English detachment with the convoy entered the town; upon which they abandoned it with precipitation.

"The inhabitants in the fort, satisfied with the treatment they had received from the garrison, betrayed no symptoms of insurrection during the attack.

"The acquisition of the fort of Arcot soon produced the effect which had been expected from it. Chunda Sahib detached 4000 of his troops, horse and foot, from Trichinopoly, who, in their route, were joined by his son Rajah Sahib with 150 Europeans from Pondicherry, and, together with the troops already collected in the neighbourhood of Arcot, entered the city on the 23d of September, and Rajah Sahib fixed his head-quarters in the palace of the Nabob.

"Captain Clive, finding himself on the point of being closely besieged, determined to make one vigorous effort to drive the enemy out of the town, which, if it did not succeed, might at least produce the good effect of impressing them with an opinion of the courage of his men. On the 24th at noon, the greatest part of the garrison, with the four field-pieces, sallied out of the north-west gate: this faced a street, which, after continuing about seventy yards in a direct line to the north, turned off to the east, and formed another street, at the end of which, on the left

hand, was situated the Nabob's palace. This fronted another street, which, striking to the south, continued on the eastern side of the fort. The square interval between these three streets and the northern wall of the fort was filled with buildings and enclosures. Captain Clive, intending to place the enemy between two fires, ordered a platoon under the command of Ensign Glass to march up the street on the eastern side of the fort, which led up to the palace, and advancing himself, with the main body, along the street leading from the north-west gate, found the French troops, with four field-pieces, drawn up at the end of the cross street in front of the palace. Captain Clive's party no sooner came in sight of them, than a hot cannonade ensued in the cross street, at the distance of only thirty yards. The French in a few minutes were driven from their guns, and ran into the palace; but by this time the troops of Rajah Sahib had taken possession of all the houses in the street; and secure under this cover, kept up a continual fire from their musketry, with such good aim, that fourteen men, who pushed to bring away the French guns, were all either killed or wounded. There was on one side of the street a large choultry: these are buildings intended for the reception of travellers, covered, and enclosed on three sides with walls, but open in front,

where, instead of a wall, the roof is supported by pillars.

"Captain Clive, to preserve his men, relinquished the intention of bringing off the enemy's cannon, and ordered them to enter the choultry; from hence the artillery-men, stepping out and retreating into it, immediately after they performed the services allotted to each of them, continued to load and fire their field-pieces, until they had recoiled into the north street. The troops then, quitting the choultry, joined their guns, and proceeded to the fort without meeting any further molestation. Ensign Glass's platoon returned at the same time: these had encountered, and put to flight three or four hundred of the enemy's sepoys, whom they found posted as an advanced guard in an inclosure adjoining to the street through which they intended to pass to the palace; where, by this interruption, they were prevented from arriving in time to render the service expected from them. The garrison suffered this day the loss of fifteen Europeans, who were either killed on the spot, or died afterwards of their wounds: amongst them was lieutenant Trenwith, who, perceiving a sepoy from a window taking aim at Captain Clive, pulled him on one side; upon which the sepoy, changing his aim, shot lieutenant Trenwith through the body. Lieutenant

Revel, the only artillery officer, with sixteen other men, was likewise disabled. This sally would be condemned by the rules of war established in Europe, for they forbid the besieged to run such a risk, unless they are assured of greatly outnumbering the party they attack; but it is not reasonable to strain the rules calculated for one system to the service of another differing so widely from it, as the modes of war in Hindustan differ from those in Europe.

"The next day Rajah Sahib was joined by 2000 men from Vellore, commanded by Mortaza Ali in person; and took possession of all the avenues leading to the fort, which seemed little capable of sustaining the impending siege. Its extent was more than a mile in circumference; the walls were in many places ruinous; the rampart too narrow to admit the firing of artillery; the parapet low and slightly built; several of the towers decayed, and none of them capable of receiving more than one piece of cannon; the ditch was in most places fordable, in others dry, and in some choked up; there was between the walls of the fort and the ditch a space, about ten feet broad, intended for a fausse-braye; but this had no parapet at the scarp of the ditch. The fort had two gates, one to the north-west, the other to the east: both of them were large piles of masonry, projecting forty feet beyond the walls; and

the passage from these gates was, instead of a drawbridge, a large causeway crossing the ditch. The garrison had, from their arrival, employed themselves indefatigably to remove and repair as many of these inconveniences and defects as the smallness of their number could attend to. They had endeavoured to burn down several of the nearest houses, but without success; for these, having no wood-work in their construction, excepting the beams which supported the ceiling, resisted the blaze; of these houses the enemy's infantry took possession, and began to fire upon the ramparts, and wounded several of the garrison before night, when they retired. At midnight Ensign Glass was sent with two men, and some barrels of gunpowder, to blow up the two houses which most annoyed the fort. This party was let down by ropes over the wall, and, entering the houses without being discovered, made the explosion, but with so little skill, that it did not produce the intended effect. At their return, the rope by which Ensign Glass was getting into the fort broke, and he was by the fall rendered incapable of further duty; so that, at the beginning of the siege, the garrison was deprived of the service of four of the eight officers who set out on the expedition; for one was killed, two wounded, and another returned to Madras; and the troops fit for duty were diminished to 120

Europeans and 200 sepoys; these were besieged by 150 Europeans, 2,000 sepoys, 3,000 cavalry, and 5,000 peons.

"The store of provisions in the fort was only sufficient to supply the garrison sixty days, which rendered it necessary to send away all the inhabitants, excepting a few artificers; and the enemy permitted them to pass through their guard without molestation. Amongst those who remained was a mason, who had been for many years employed in the fort. He gave information that there was an aqueduct under ground, known to very few, but which, if discovered by the enemy, would enable them to drain the only reservoir of water in the fort. The man was rewarded for this seasonable intelligence, and employed to prevent the mischief by choking up a part of the aqueduct within the walls. For fourteen days the enemy, not yet furnished with battering cannon, carried on the siege by firing from the houses with musketry, and a bombardment from four mortars. The bombardment did but little damage; and, to avoid the effect of the musketry, none of the garrison were suffered to appear on the ramparts, excepting the few immediately necessary to avoid a surprise; but, notwithstanding this precaution, several were killed, and more wounded: for the enemy, secure in the houses, and firing from resting-

places, took such excellent aim, that they often hit a man when nothing but his head appeared above the parapet; and in this manner three serjeants were killed, who at different times singly accompanied Captain Clive in visiting the works. Mortaza Ali, a few days after his arrival, pretended to be dissatisfied with Rajah Sahib, and removed his troops to a different part of the city, from whence he sent a messenger inviting the garrison to make a sally on the quarters of Rajah Sahib, in which he offered to assist them with his whole force. Captain Clive mistrusted his professions; but, considering the advantage of keeping such a number of the enemy's troops inactive, pretended to approve of the proposal, and carried on for several days a correspondence, until Mortaza Ali, suspecting his scheme was detected, rejoined the army.

"On the 24th of October, the French troops received from Pondicherry two eighteen-pounders, and seven pieces of smaller calibre, and immediately opened a battery to the north-west, which was so well served, that their very first shot dismounted one of the eighteen-pounders in the fort, and the next entirely disabled it. The garrison mounted the other eighteen-pounder; and this, after a few shot, was likewise dismounted; after which, it was employed only in such parts of the fort, where it was not exposed to the enemy's

artillery. The three field-pieces were likewise cautiously reserved to repulse the enemy when they should storm; so that their battery, firing without much opposition, in six days beat down all the wall lying between two towers, and made a practicable breach of fifty feet.

"In the meantime, the garrison were employed in making works to defend it. A trench was dug just under the rampart, and behind that, at some distance, another; both of which were scattered with crows'-feet, and behind them the walls of a house were pulled down to the height of a breast-work, from whence a row of palisadoes was carried along on each end of both trenches, and continued up the rampart to the parapet. A field-piece was planted on one of the towers which flanked the breach without, and two small pieces of cannon on the flat roof of a house within the fort, opposite to the entrance. In these employments, as, indeed, in all others, the officers contributed their labour equally with the common men; and the enemy, informed of these preparations to defend the breach, did not think it safe to attack it before they had made another. They had by this time burst one of their eighteen-pounders, and removed the other, with one nine-pounder, to a battery which they erected to the south-west.

"The garrison, intending to convince Rajah

Sahib that they were in a condition to execute even labours not indispensably necessary, thickened the highest tower of the ramparts, and then raised on the top of it a mound of earth, to such a height as commanded the palace, over the interjacent houses. On the top of this mound they hoisted a vast piece of cannon, sent, according to the tradition of the fort, from Delhi, by Aurungzebe, and said to have been drawn by 1000 yoke of oxen. There were several iron balls belonging to it, each weighing seventy-two pounds. The cannon was laid on the mound, and loaded with thirty pounds of powder, which was fired by a train carried to a considerable distance on the ground. The shot went through the palace, to the no small terror of Rajah Sahib and his principal officers; and, as this was the only effect intended, the cannon was fired only once in the day, at the time when the officers assembled at the head-quarters: on the fourth day it burst.

"The enemy, as if they intended to retaliate this affront, filled up a large house, which commanded the eastern gate, with earth well rammed down, and upon this base raised a square mound of earth to such a height as commanded not only the gate, but likewise every part within the fort. From hence, they intended to fire on the rampart with musketry and two small pieces of cannon.

They were suffered to go on with their work until they had completed it and mounted the cannon; when the garrison began to fire from the reserved eighteen-pounder, and in less than an hour, the mound gave way, and tumbled at once, with fifty men stationed on it, some of whom were killed, and many disabled.

"Notwithstanding the numbers of the enemy's guards which surrounded the fort, the garrison, by means of able spies, carried on a constant correspondence with Madras and Fort St. David; where the Company's agents were very solicitous to relieve them; and, having received some recruits from Europe, formed a party of 100 Europeans, who, with 200 sepoys, set out from Madras under the command of Lieutenant Innis. Before they had advanced thirty miles on their way to Arcot, they were surrounded in the town of Trivatore by 2000 of Rajah Sahib's troops, detached with twenty Europeans, and two field-pieces from the city. The English party, having no cannon, were so severely annoyed by the enemy's, that Lieutenant Innis, as the only resource, made a push with all his Europeans to drive them from their guns. The attempt succeeded, but not without a sharp contest, in which twenty of the English, and two of their officers were killed, and a greater number wounded. This loss deterred the rest from continuing their march, and

they retreated to Poonamalee, a fort built by the Moors, and at this time belonging to the Company, fifteen miles west of Madras.

"On the 24th of October, the enemy opened their battery to the south-west. The part of the wall against which they directed their fire, was in a very ruinous condition; but it had the advantage of being much less exposed than any other to the fire from the houses. The garrison, therefore, kept up a constant fire of musketry against the battery, and several times drove the enemy out of it; but the breach, notwithstanding, increased every day.

"The retreat of Lieutenant Innis left the garrison little hopes of succour from the settlements; but at this time their spirits were raised by the hopes of other resources. A body of 6000 Mahrattas, under the command of Morari-row, had lain for some time encamped at the foot of the western mountains, about thirty miles from Arcot: they had been hired to assist Mahommed-Ali, by the king of Mysore; but the retreat of the English and the Nabob's troops to Trichinopoly, had been represented in the neighbouring countries so much to their prejudice, that the Nabob's affairs were thought to be desperate, and his allies were suspected of having little intention to support him; and from this persuasion the Mahrattas remained inactive. Captain Clive

had found means to send a messenger to inform them of his situation, and to request their approach to his relief. The messenger returning safe to the fort, brought a letter from Morari-row, in which he said he would not delay a moment to send a detachment of his troops to the assistance of such brave men as the defenders of Arcot, whose behaviour had now first convinced him that the English could fight.

"Rajah Sahib, receiving intelligence of their intentions, sent a flag of truce on the 30th of October, with proposals for the surrender of the fort. He offered honourable terms to the garrison, and a large sum of money to Captain Clive; and, if his offers were not accepted, he threatened to storm the fort immediately, and put every man to the sword.

"Captain Clive, in his answer, reproached the badness of Chunda Sahib's cause; treated Rajah Sahib's offers of money with contempt; and said that he had too good an opinion of his prudence to believe that he would attempt to storm until he had got better soldiers than the rabble of which his army was composed. As soon as the messenger was despatched, the flag of truce was pulled down; but, the enemy not understanding the rules of European war, numbers of them remained near the ditch, parleying with the sepoys, and persuading them to desert. The

crowd was several times warned to retire, but, continuing to disregard the injunction, was dispersed by a volley of small arms, which killed several of them.

"Lieutenant Innis's party, reinforced to the number of 150 Europeans, and with four field-pieces, was now advancing under the command of Captain Kilpatrick; and on the 9th of November a detachment of Mahrattas arrived in the neighbourhood, and intercepted some ammunition going to the enemy. They likewise attempted to enter the town; but, finding every street and avenue barricadoed, they contented themselves with plundering and setting fire to some houses in the skirts of it; after which they retreated.

"By this time the enemy had, from their battery to the south-west, made a breach much larger than that to the north-west, for it extended near thirty yards; but the ditch before it was full of water, and not fordable; and the garrison had counterworked this breach with the same kind of defences as the other.

"Rajah Sahib, exasperated by the answer he had received to his summons, and alarmed by the approach of the Mahrattas and the detachment from Madras, determined to storm the fort. In the evening, a spy brought intelligence of this to the garrison; and at midnight another came,

with all the enemy's dispositions, and the hour of attack, which was to begin at the dawn of the day, by the signal of three bombs.

"Captain Clive, almost exhausted with fatigue, lay down to sleep, ordering himself to be awakened at the first alarm.

"It was the 14th of November, and the festival which commemorates the murder of the brothers Hassan and Hassein happened to fall out at this time. This is celebrated by the Mahommedans of Hindustan with a kind of religious madness, some acting and others bewailing the catastrophe of their saints with so much energy, that several die of the excesses they commit: they are likewise persuaded that whoever falls in battle against unbelievers, during any of the days of this ceremony, shall instantly be translated into the higher paradise, without stopping at any of the intermediate purgatories. To the enthusiasm of superstition was added the more certain efficacy of inebriation; for most of the troops, as is customary during the agitations of the festival, had eaten plentifully of bang, a plant which either stupifies, or excites the most desperate excesses of rage. Thus prepared, as soon as the morning broke, the army of Rajah Sahib advanced to the attack. Besides a multitude that came with ladders to every part of the walls that were accessible, there appeared four principal divisions; two

of these divisions advanced to the two gates, and the other two were allotted to the breaches.

"Captain Clive, awakened by the alarm, found his garrison at their posts, according to the dispositions he had made. The parties who attacked the gates drove before them several elephants, who, with large plates of iron fixed on their foreheads, were intended to break them down; but the elephants, wounded by the musketry, soon turned, and trampled on those who escorted them. The ditch before the breach to the north-west was fordable; and as many as the breach would admit mounted it with a mad kind of intrepidity, whilst numbers came and sat down with great composure in the fausse-braye under the tower where the field-piece was planted, and waited there, to relieve those who were employed in the attack: these passed the breach, and some of them even got over the first trench before the defenders gave the fire: it fell heavily, and every shot did execution; and a number of muskets were loaded in readiness, which those behind delivered to the first rank as fast as they could discharge them. The two pieces of cannon from the top of the house fired likewise on the assailants, who in a few minutes abandoned the attack; when another body, and then another succeeded, who were driven off in the same manner. In the mean time bombs, with short

fusees, which had been prepared and lodged in the adjacent rampart, were thrown into the fausse-braye, and by their explosion drove the crowd who had seated themselves there back again over the ditch.

"At the breach to the south-west the enemy brought a raft, and seventy men embarked on it to cross the ditch, which was flanked by two field-pieces, one in each tower. The raft had almost gained the fausse-braye, when Captain Clive, observing that the gunners fired with bad aim, took the management of one of the field-pieces himself, and, in three or four discharges, flung them into such confusion, that they overset the raft, and tumbled into the ditch; where some of them were drowned, and the rest, intent only on their own preservation, swam back and left the raft behind.

"In these different attacks, the enemy continued the storm for an hour; when they relinquished all their attempts of annoyance at once, and employed themselves earnestly in carrying off their dead. Amongst these was the commander of their sepoys, who fell in the fausse-braye of the northern breach. He had distinguished himself with great bravery in the attack, and was so much beloved by his troops, that one of them crossed the ditch, and carried off his body, exposing himself, during the attempt, to the fire

of forty muskets, from which he had the good fortune to escape. It seemed as if the enemy expected that the garrison would permit them to fulfil this duty to their friends; but, finding that they suffered severely in attempting it, they at last retreated and disappeared. Their loss, during the storm, was computed to be not less than 400 men killed and wounded; of which very few were Europeans; for most of the French troops were observed drawn up, and looking on at a distance. Of the defenders, only four Europeans were killed, and two sepoys wounded. Many of the garrison being disabled by sickness or wounds, the number which repulsed the storm was no more than eighty Europeans (officers included), and 120 sepoys; and these, besides serving five pieces of cannon, expended 12,000 musket cartridges during the attack.

"Two hours after, the enemy renewed their fire upon the fort, both with their cannon and with musketry from the houses. At two in the afternoon they demanded leave to bury their dead; which was granted, and a truce allowed until four. They then recommenced, and continued their fire smartly till two in the morning, when, on a sudden, it ceased totally; and, at daybreak, intelligence was brought that the whole army had abandoned the town with precipitation. On receiving this joyful news, the

garrison immediately marched into the enemy's quarters, where they found four pieces of artillery, four mortars, and a large quantity of ammunition, which they brought in triumph into the fort. During the time that the garrison were shut up in the fort, forty-five Europeans and thirty sepoys were killed, and a greater number of both wounded; most of whom suffered by the enemy's musketry from the houses.

"Thus ended this siege, maintained fifty days, under every disadvantage of situation and force, by a handful of men, in their first campaign, with a spirit worthy of the most veteran troops: and conducted by their young commander with indefatigable activity, unshaken constancy, and undaunted courage: and, notwithstanding he had at this time neither read books, nor conversed with men capable of giving him much instruction in the military art, all the resources which he employed in the defence of Arcot, were such as are dictated by the best masters in the science of war." *

I have it in my power, from authority I cannot doubt, to add to the account of this celebrated siege an anecdote, singularly illustrative of the character of the native troops of India. When provisions became so scarce that there was a fear

* Orme, Vol. I. p. 183—196.

that famine might compel them to surrender, the sepoys proposed to Clive to limit them to the water * in which the rice was boiled. "It is," they said, "sufficient for our support: the Europeans require the grain."

This fact is as honourable to Clive, as to those under his command; for the conduct of the native troops of India will always be found to depend upon the character of the officers under whom they are employed. Flattered and elevated by the confidence reposed in them, they will almost rival Europeans in their efforts to merit such consideration; but when their character and feelings are not understood, and a secondary place is assigned them, or when they are treated as an inferior class of troops, they soon become, from sinking in their own estimation, what ignorant and unskilful leaders have too often, in justification of their own failure, described them. From the nature and constitution of this part of our army, it cannot be otherwise; and there are abundant examples to prove, that where knowledge and talent are united in the commander, no fear need be entertained of his success in stimulating the native part of his force to every effort, of which patient suffering, under

* This water is called Canjee, and contains a sufficient infusion of the grain to be nutritive, resembling thin gruel.

privation and fatigue, or active and daring valour in front of the enemy, is capable.

Clive took full advantage of the impressions made by his successful defence of Arcot. Having increased his force by a detachment from Fort St. David of two hundred Europeans and seven hundred sepoys, he took the small fort of Timery *; and aided by a party of Mahrattas, sent by Morari-row, the chief of Goothy, he did not hesitate, by a forced march, to meet a party of three hundred Europeans, two thousand horse, and two thousand five hundred sepoys, with four field pieces, which had been sent from Pondicherry to aid Rajah Sahib.

After a well-contested action, the French were completely routed; and night only saved them from destruction. The Mahrattas, who had displayed courage in the action, were most eager in the pursuit, in which they took four hundred horses, and Rajah Sahib's military chest, containing 100,000 rupees. †

These successes turned the tide of the public opinion, in that part of the country where they occurred, in favour of the English. The killahdar (or governor) of Arnee proclaimed his allegiance to Mahommed Ali; and six hundred French sepoys, having brought their arms, were enlisted, and added by Clive to the strength of his small force.

* Orme, Vol. I. p. 196. † Id. ibid., p. 199.

Clive next proceeded to the attack of Conjeveram, of which the French had made a post. The commandant compelled two English officers, Revel and Glass, who were their prisoners, to write, that if the place was attacked they should be exposed on the wall. They, however, added to the letter, that they made this communication by desire of the enemy, but trusted no consideration for them would for one instant stop operations. When battering cannon arrived, a breach was made; but the French garrison, dreading the just resentment which their conduct* had excited, did not await a storm, but abandoning the pagoda at night, left behind the two prisoners they had threatened to expose.

Clive, after destroying the defences of Conjeveram, and strengthening the garrison of Arcot, proceeded himself to Fort St. David, to report the details of his success, and to suggest further operations.

These successes had, at first, a favourable impression upon the affairs of Mahommed Ali, who still remained at Trichinopoly, where he was in daily expectation of being joined by a large force

* Besides the unwarrantable threat of exposing their prisoners, Orme (Vol. I. p. 199.) states, that, though they gave quarter to the two officers, Revel and Glass, they had murdered in their litters five or six disabled soldiers, whom they took when on their route from Arcot to Fort St. David.

from Mysore, to the Regent of which country he had made great promises. He had been joined by a body of Mahrattas sent by Morari-row; but the comparatively small force of the English led their cautious commander, Captain Gingen, to limit himself to the defensive.

This excited a spirit of discontent in the garrison, and more in the Mahrattas, who, eager for action, upbraided the English for their want of enterprise, telling them*, "they were not the same kind of men whom they had seen fight so gallantly at Arcot!"

In the beginning of the ensuing year (January, 1752), Rajah Sahib reassembled a force, which amounted to four hundred Europeans, two thousand sepoys, and two thousand five hundred horse, with a train of artillery, and began to lay waste the territories of Mahommed Ali, plundering those of the English at Poonamalee, and burning their newly-erected houses at St. Thomas's Mount.

To arrest the progress of this party, a force of three hundred and eighty Europeans, one thousand three hundred sepoys, and six field pieces, was placed under Clive. He immediately† marched towards the enemy, who, notwithstanding their superiority in numbers, did not venture to meet him, but abandoned different strong po-

* Orme, Vol. I. p. 206.

† He commenced his march, February 22. 1752.

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sitions on his approach; till he came so unexpectedly upon them at the village of Coverspak, that the leading men of his party received a discharge from their artillery, posted in a grove, before he was aware of their vicinity. To remedy the temporary confusion this created, Clive took advantage of a water-course to afford his infantry shelter, while he secured his baggage and prepared for an attack. His first efforts were unsuccessful, from the superiority of the enemy's artillery; and he soon saw that he must either capture it or retreat. The mango grove, in which it was placed, was defended in front by a steep bank and ditch; but the report of those he sent to reconnoitre the rear of their position, satisfied him it was open and not guarded. He instantly detached six hundred of his best men to make a detour, and attack the enemy in rear, while the main body pressed them in front. He had proceeded some distance with this detachment, in order to ensure its proper direction, when his temporary absence had nearly caused the defeat of the troops he left engaged in the water-course. These men, accustomed to look to him alone for victory, and discouraged by so large a party being detached, had given way; and on his return, it was not without great difficulty he rallied them, and made them recommence a firing, which was continued, and the enemy amused, till a volley

from the party who had been sent to the rear announced their arrival and success at the same moment. For having reconnoitred the position by means of an officer who, speaking French, was mistaken for a friend, they had approached so close before they were discovered, that the enemy were thrown into inextricable confusion. Nine pieces of cannon were taken, and all fled, except a party of sixty Europeans, who surrendered: — fifty Frenchmen and three hundred sepoys were found dead upon the field. The loss of the English detachment was also severe. Forty Europeans and thirty sepoys were killed, and a much greater number were wounded: — but the effect produced by the skill and gallantry of Clive was decisive. The French force in this part of the Carnatic was destroyed, and the reputation of the British arms was restored, or rather founded, in India: — for before his brilliant successes no event had occurred which could lead the natives to believe that the English, as soldiers, were equal to the French.*

Clive was recalled to Madras to take charge of a

* Clive, on his return to Fort St. David, marched by the new buildings of a town on the site where Nasir Jung was slain, to which the name of Dupleix-Fatiha Bad (or "the town of victory") had been given. A pompous pillar was in preparation to commemorate, in every eastern language, an event which the French deemed a great victory. Clive and his troops, viewing this transaction in a very different light, razed to the ground these monuments of pride.

considerable detachment destined to reinforce the garrison of Trichinopoly; but before he marched, Major Lawrence returned from England, and assumed the command. The young* and successful soldier placed himself under the veteran, whom he never ceased to regard with attachment and respect. Of the sentiments which Lawrence entertained towards him, we have the strongest proof in his narrative. When expressing his opinion of Clive's operations in the Carnatic, he observes, "The French bringing almost their "whole force into the field with Chunda Sahib, "and leaving Arcot but poorly defended, a "scheme was laid to reduce part of that country "to the Nabob's obedience. Captain Clive "commanded the party. The expedition was "attended with uncommon success, which some "people were pleased to term fortunate and "lucky; but in my opinion, from the knowledge "I have of the gentleman, he deserved and "might expect, from his conduct, every thing "as it fell out. A man of an undaunted reso-"lution, of a cool temper, and of a presence of "mind which never left him in the greatest "danger,—born a soldier, for, without a military "education of any sort or much conversing with "any of the profession, from his judgment and

* Clive was, at this period, only twenty-six years of age.

" good sense he led an army like an experienced " officer and a brave soldier, with a prudence that " certainly warranted success. This young man's " early genius surprised and engaged my atten- " tion, as well before as at the siege of Devecot- " tah, where he behaved in courage and judgment " much beyond what could be expected from his " years; and his success afterwards confirmed " what I said to many people concerning him."*

The object of this memoir neither admits nor requires a detail of the military operations or political transactions of which Trichinopoly and its vicinity now became the theatre. The chief contest was between the British and French; whose forces, though professedly only subsidiary to the native princes, were in fact principals, and fought for their existence in this part of India. It has been already stated, that Captain Gingen almost entirely confined himself within the walls of the fort, while the Nabob and his allies were under the protection of its guns. M. Law, with a superior body of Europeans, and Chunda Sahib were not only in possession of the strong pagoda of Seringham, and of the whole island betwixt the Caveri and Coleroon, but had advanced their batteries and posts to the south of the Caveri, to which they were now sufficiently bold to remove their encampments.

* Colonel Lawrence's Narrative, p. 14.

The arrival, however, of Major Lawrence with his reinforcement, his established fame, and the rising reputation of Clive, infused new life into the English and their allies. A spirited and successful affair, which was the consequence of an attempt made by the French to intercept the entrance of this party into the fort, gave earnest of that change in operations which was now to be expected, and M. Law, against the remonstrances of Chunda Sahib, and contrary to the instructions of Dupleix, on seeing Lawrence making preparations for a general attack of his position to the south of the Caveri, withdrew his troops to the island of Seringham, placing himself from that moment on the defensive. Every advantage of the retrograde motion of the French was taken by Major Lawrence.

This officer, equally distinguished for his judgment and spirit, had none of that petty jealousy which often leads men in superior stations to deny themselves and their country the full benefit of the extraordinary talents which may happen to belong to those under their command. Major Lawrence, perfectly appreciating the character of Clive, consulted him on all occasions. By his advice he divided his small force, at a hazard which a knowledge of the mind, or rather minds, of those opposed to him, could alone have justified. While half of his

troops remained at Trichinopoly, the other half was placed in a position between Seringham and Pondicherry, in order to interrupt that intercourse on which the French depended for their support. The successful result of these operations was the capture and death of Chunda Sahib*, and the surrender of the French troops. Whatever may have been the claim of Chunda Sahib to the station he assumed, and in which he was supported by his European allies, his personal character is entitled to more respect than that of any of the native actors who appeared on the scene during this short but eventful period. He was active, brave, and generous; and whenever he had the sole direction of affairs, evinced spirit and judgment. His fate was unhappy. When M. Law, reduced to distress in the pagoda of Seringham, told him he could no longer afford him protection, Chunda Sahib listened to a deceitful offer of Monackjee, the general of the Tanjore forces, who, instead of that kindness with which he had sworn to treat him, placed him

* When the affairs of Chunda Sahib became desperate, and he could no longer support his followers, the leaders of the parties of whom his army was composed, solicited permission to leave him, and this request was readily granted by that ill-fated prince, who told them they had only anticipated his wish, as he was no longer able to support them, but at the same time solemnly promised to liquidate their large arrears, should fortune ever again smile upon him.

in confinement, and hastened to inform those with whom he was co-operating (the English, the Nabob Mahommed Ali, the Mysorians, and the Mahrattas,) of the noble prize he had decoyed into his toils; but Monackjee, instead of that applause and profit he anticipated from his treachery, soon found, that while all resolved he should not retain his prisoner, each party was desirous of having him under their own charge. On seeing that they were on the point of quarrelling with his prince, and amongst each other, for the possession of Chunda Sahib's person, he determined, with a cruelty equal to his perfidy, to put that chief to death. The purpose was no sooner formed than executed; and the head of Chunda Sahib was sent to his rival and enemy, Mahommed Ali, who exhibited it to his army and followers, under circumstances meant to throw obloquy upon the deceased, but which, however sanctioned by usage, have, even in India, more commonly the effect of awakening personal resentment, and bringing shame upon those who indulge in such barbarous and unmanly triumphs over the remains of gallant though unfortunate enemies.

The surrender of the French and the death of Chunda Sahib, instead of terminating hostilities, and fixing Mahommed Ali in the sovereignty of the Carnatic, gave rise to disputes between that

prince and his allies, which seemed to place peace at a greater distance than ever. Reduced to extremity, Mahommed Ali purchased the aid of Nundirauze, the regent of Mysore, by compliance with his exorbitant demands. The most important was the cession of Trichinopoly, to which the nabob was formally pledged by a written engagement, the performance of which was now demanded, but compliance evaded on a pretext that the period was not arrived when the nabob could give it up with safety, as many of the strongholds in the Carnatic were still in the hands of the enemy. The Mahratta leader, Morari-row, was called in as umpire. That gallant but wily chief, professing to be with both parties, had no desire but to possess * himself of the place in dispute. He strongly advised the Mysorian to insist on the fulfilling of the treaty, and became publicly the advocate for its performance, while, in private with Mahommed Ali, he ridiculed the idea of any one entertaining the expectation, that he ever should be so absurd as to give up (when he could keep it) a fortress which was now conveniently described † as the property of the Emperor of Delhi, and one which it would be treason in his delegate to surrender. But I quit this scene of evasion, intrigue, and perfidy, to

* Orme, Vol. I. p. 245. † Id ibid.

describe the part which Clive took in the operations which terminated this short campaign in a manner so honourable to the British arms. (A. D. 1752.)

Major Lawrence, who, as he himself has observed, early discerned the extraordinary qualities of Clive, fostered them with a care which reflects the highest honour on his character. He attended on all occasions to the suggestions of the young soldier, and as cheerfully granted, as the other in every case deserved, the post of danger. In the actions which took place before they entered Trichinopoly, Clive was eminently distinguished by having occupied and maintained, under a most severe fire, a small building in front of the French battalion, which, by his advance and that of Captain Dalton with the grenadiers and some artillery, was compelled to retreat with the confederate force, from the position he had so judiciously seized.

But it was in the execution of the plan already noticed, of interrupting the intercourse between Seringham and Pondicherry, that Clive found the opportunity of exhibiting those powers of combination, self-possession, and intrepidity that were so conspicuous in his character. He suggested, as has been before stated, this bold operation to Major Lawrence, with whom he lived on terms of the strictest intimacy; and

the latter, in adopting a plan which a contemporary historian describes "as risking the whole to gain the whole," trusted entirely for its success to the enterprise and judgment of his young friend: but Clive was the junior captain of his force, and it was not easy to appoint him to such an important command over the heads of so many officers, some of whom had acquired a just reputation. The difficulty Major Lawrence apprehended on this head was, however, soon put an end to by the open declaration of the allies, that they would not detach the portions of their troops necessary to form this corps under any other but him who had defended Arcot.

The force with which Clive marched * from Trichinopoly consisted of four hundred Europeans, seven hundred sepoys, three thousand Mahratta, and one thousand Tanjore horse, with eight pieces of artillery, two of which were battering guns. He passed the Coleroon before daylight, and occupied a pagoda called Samiaveram, seven miles north of that river, and on the high road betwixt Seringham and Utatore, a post of the French on their line of communication with Pondicherry. His first care was to strengthen this position, and to plant cannon

* April 6th, 1752.

so as to command the road both to the north and south.

Dupleix, on learning the situation of affairs at Trichinopoly, had detached a party of seven hundred men under Monsieur D'Autueil, who had orders to proceed to Seringham and take the command from M. Law, with whose conduct the French governor was much dissatisfied. The utmost importance was attached to intercepting this body of men; and Clive, on learning their arrival at Utatore, and that it was D'Autueil's intention to attempt the junction by a circuitous route, marched to oppose him, leaving a small part of his force to guard his post at Semiaveram; but on finding that D'Autueil, alarmed at his approach, had hastened back to Utatore, he lost no time in returning. M. Law, who heard of his leaving his post, but not of his return, detached *, as soon as it was dark, a corps of eighty Europeans, and seven hundred sepoys, to attack the few troops he imagined to be remaining at Samiaveram. Of these men forty were English deserters. The extraordinary events which followed cannot be better related than in the words of the historian † to whom we have so often referred.

"The party arrived near the camp at mid-

* April 14th, 1752. † Orme, Vol. I. p. 223.

night, when one of their spies informed the commanding officer, that the troops which had marched against M. D'Autueil had returned; but he, imputing the information either to cowardice or treachery, gave no credit to the spy, and proceeded; they were challenged by the advanced guard of English sepoys, on which the officer of the deserters, an Irishman, stept out and told them, that he was sent by Major Lawrence to reinforce Captain Clive: and the rest of the deserters, speaking English likewise, confirmed the assertion, and persuaded the sepoys so fully, that they omitted the usual precaution of asking the counter-word, which would certainly have discovered the stratagem, and sent one of their body to conduct the enemy to the head-quarters. They continued their march through a part of the Mahratta camp, without giving or receiving any disturbance, until they came to the lesser pagoda. Here they were challenged by the sentinels, and by others posted in a neighbouring choultry to the north of it, in which Captain Clive lay asleep. They returned the challenge by a volley into each place, and immediately entered the pagoda, putting all they met to the sword. Captain Clive, starting out of his sleep, and not conceiving it possible that the enemy could have advanced into the centre of his camp, imputed the firing to his

own sepoys alarmed by some attack at the outskirts; he, however, ran to the upper pagoda, where the greatest part of his Europeans were quartered, who, having likewise taken the alarm, were under arms; and he immediately returned with two hundred of them to the choultry. Here he now discovered a large body of sepoys drawn up, facing the south, and firing at random. Their position, which looked to the enemy's encampment, joined to their confusion, confirmed him in his conjecture, that they were his own troops who had taken some unnecessary alarm. In this supposition, he drew up his Europeans within twenty yards of their rear, and then, going alone amongst them, ordered them to cease, upbraiding some with the panic he supposed them to have taken, and even striking others: at length, one of the sepoys, who understood a little of the French language, discovering that he was an Englishman, attacked and wounded him in two places with his sword; but, finding himself overpowered, ran away to the lower pagoda. Captain Clive, exasperated at this insolence from a man whom he imagined to be in his own service, followed him to the gate, where, to his great surprise, he was accosted by six Frenchmen. His usual presence of mind did not fail him on this critical occasion, but, suggesting to him all that

had happened, he told the Frenchmen with great composure, that he was come to offer them terms, and if they would look out they would perceive the pagoda surrounded with his whole army, who were determined to give no quarter if any resistance were made. The firmness with which these words were delivered made such an impression, that three of the Frenchmen ran into the pagoda to carry this intelligence, whilst the other three surrendered their arms to Captain Clive, and followed him towards the choultry, whither he hastened, intending to order the Europeans to attack the body of sepoys, whom he now first knew to be his enemies; but these had already discovered the danger of their situation, and had marched out of the reach of the Europeans, who, imagining that they did this in obedience to Captain Clive's orders, made no motion to interrupt or attack them. Soon after, eight Frenchmen, who had been sent from the pagoda to reconnoitre, fell in with the English troops and were made prisoners; and these, with the other three whom Captain Clive had taken, were delivered to the charge of a serjeant's party, who, not knowing, in the time of darkness and confusion, that the enemy were in possession of the lower pagoda, carried them thither, and, on delivering them to the guard, found out their error; but such was also the confusion of

the French in the pagoda, that they suffered the serjeant and his party to return unmolested. The rest of the English troops had now joined the others, and Captain Clive, imagining that the enemy would never have attempted so desperate an enterprise without supporting it with their whole army, deemed it absolutely necessary to storm the pagoda, before the troops who were in it could receive any assistance. One of the two folding-doors of the gateway had for some time been taken down to be repaired, and the other was strongly stapled down, so that the remaining part of the entrance would admit only two men abreast. The English soldiers made the attack, and continued it for some time with great resolution; but the deserters within fought desperately, and killed an officer and fifteen men, on which the attack was ordered to cease till day-break; and, in the mean time, such a disposition was made as might prevent those in the pagoda from escaping, and at the same time oppose any other body which might come to their relief. At day-break the commanding officer of the French, seeing the danger of his situation, made a sally at the head of his men, who received so heavy a fire, that he himself, with twelve others who first came out of the gateway, were killed by the volley; on which the rest ran back to the pagoda. Captain Clive then advanced into the

porch of the gate, to parley with the enemy; and, being weak with the loss of blood and fatigue, stood with his back to the wall of the porch, and leaned, stooping forward, on the shoulders of two serjeants. The officer of the English deserters presented himself with great insolence, and, telling Captain Clive, with abusive language, that he would shoot him, fired his musket. The ball missed him, but went through the bodies of both the serjeants on whom he was leaning, and they both fell mortally* wounded. The Frenchmen had hitherto defended the pagoda, in compliance with the English deserters; but, thinking it necessary to disavow such an outrage, which might exclude them from any pretensions to quarter, their officer immediately surrendered. By this time, the body of the enemy's sepoys had passed out of the camp, with as little interruption as they had entered it: but orders having been sent to the Mahrattas to pursue them, Innis-Khan, with all his men, mounted at day-break, and came up with them

* On this incident, Mr. Beaufoy has the following note: — "As it may, perhaps, be difficult to conceive how one shot should destroy his two supporters and leave him unhurt, Mr. Archdeacon Clive mentioned this difficulty to Lord Clive, who answered, that the two men on whose shoulders he leaned were shorter than himself, and were both of them in the line of the shot, his own body being so much behind as to be out of the line." Biog. Brit. art. CLIVE, p. 650. note.

in the open plain, before they gained the bank of the Coleroon. The sepoys no sooner perceived them, than they flung away their arms, and attempted to save themselves by dispersing; but the Mahrattas, who never figure so much as in these cruel exploits, exerted themselves with such activity, that, according to their own report, not a single man of seven hundred escaped alive: it is certain that none ever appeared to contradict this assertion. Besides the escapes already mentioned, Captain Clive had another which was not discovered until the hurry of the day was over, when it was found that the volley, which the enemy fired into the choultry where he was sleeping, had shattered a box that lay under his feet, and killed a servant who lay close to him."

The mistakes of the night at Samiaveram were of a character more likely to be created by the imagination of a dramatic poet, to give incident and spirit to the sudden change of scene and action, than to take place in real military operations; but no occurrence of his life called forth in a more remarkable degree that quickness of perception and that calm self-possession for which Clive was distinguished.

Major Lawrence, not wishing to hazard again the important post of Samiaveram, sent a party of four hundred sepoys, five hundred Mahratta

horse, and four field-pieces, under Captain Dalton, to watch the movements of Monsieur d'Autueil, who still remained at Utatore. The French outposts were driven back in the dusk of the evening; and the English, having been divided into two bodies, moved on the flanks of the line with the hopes of deceiving them into a belief that it was the whole of Clive's force which had come to assail them. The stratagem succeeded. D'Autueil not only drew his troops within the walls of the village, but evacuated it next morning, and retreated to Volcondah, leaving to Captain Dalton's corps the ammunition and supplies he had brought for the troops at Seringham. M. Law, who observed from the top of the pagoda at Seringham the movement of Captain Dalton's detachment, mistook it for that of Clive, and marched upon Samiaveram; but when he found the whole body of the English stationed there drawn up to receive him, he fell back on his position.

The detachment from Trichinopoly had received orders to return, but a sudden swelling of the Coleroon rendered that impracticable. Clive determined to take advantage of the state of the river to attack the French post of Pitchandah, on its northern bank, which M. Law could not now succour. Captain Dalton, being informed of his resolution, and not wishing to interfere with his

command, immediately placed his corps under Clive's orders, and requested to be employed as a volunteer! * A higher testimony to acknowledged superiority of character cannot be adduced than this temporary resignation of the claims of senior rank by a gallant and able officer, and that at the very moment when he was flushed with the success of the service on which he had been detached.

The camp of Chunda Sahib, near Seringham, was on the south bank of the Coleroon, opposite to Pitchandah. Clive, in order to annoy the enemy and to cover his operations against that place, converted into a six-gun battery a high mound on the north bank of the river, which had been raised to prevent its encroachment on the low land.† This mound completely commanded the enemy's camp‡, and was at the same time

* Captain Dalton was wounded in the subsequent operations against Pitchandah.

† April 15th, 1752.

‡ The composition of the camp he cannonaded is well described by Orme. "Every common soldier," he observes, "in an Indian army is accompanied either by a wife or a concubine; the officers have several, and the generals whole seraglios. Besides these, the army is incumbered by a number of attendants and servants, exceeding that of the fighting men; and to supply the various wants of this enervated multitude, dealers, pedlars, and retailers of all sorts follow the camp; to whom a separate quarter is allowed, in which they daily exhibit their different commodities in greater

protected from the guns at Pitchandah. The disorder created by the opening of this battery was great; men, women, children, elephants, camels, horses, and bullocks were instantly seen in disordered flight from this unexpected danger, hastening to the banks of the river, which they were, however, forced to quit by the guns of Trichinopoly, and at last found shelter by forming an encampment out of reach of the English cannon, and at some distance from the pagoda of Seringham.

This operation upon the most defenceless part of the enemy's force probably produced more effect upon the minds of the allies of the French, than any of the more substantial successes of the war. The native armies of India are kept together by very loose ties: the strongest of these are the expectations which princes can hold out, to the chiefs that serve them, of future pay and reward — as these diminish or increase, their attachment ebbs or flows; but they seldom despair of a cause, till reverses so materially affect the safety of their numerous armed and unarmed followers, that they can no longer keep them to-

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quantities, and with more regularity, than in any fair in Europe, all of them sitting on the ground in a line, with their merchandise exposed before them, and sheltered from the sun by a mat supported by sticks."— Orme, vol i. p. 228.

gether. The feelings of the latter have an extraordinary influence upon success; for as the chief receives little, if any, pay from the prince, he must support himself by loans from bankers and merchants residing in his camp, while his soldiers owe the food by which they are supported to the credit given them by the dealers in the bazaar. This reciprocal expectation and confidence is seldom shaken by any danger that is not close at hand. The bulk of the soldiers and camp followers are amused or deceived by false or exaggerated reports; but the incontrovertible proof which an attack like that of Clive gave, of their prince and his allies not being able to protect them, spread alarm through all ranks; and that alarm was soon rendered irremediable by the fall of Pitchandah.

The death of Chunda Sahib, the surrender of the French troops, and the dissensions to which these events gave rise between Mahommed Ali and his allies have already been recorded. Dupleix, who never desponded, seeing in these dissensions the means of retrieving the interests of his nation, fomented them by every means in his power; and his intrigues to gain the Mysorians and the Mahrattas were powerfully aided by his lady, who, born in India, and understanding not only the languages but the character of the natives, is stated to have been on this occasion, as on various

others, of the greatest use to her ambitious husband.

The Regent of Mysore was promised Trichinopoly, and the Mahrattas plunder and money. Both had secretly entered into engagements, which they were encouraged to avow by the complete failure of an expedition* which the governor and committee of Fort St. David sent to attack Gingee, contrary to the expressed opinion of Major Lawrence. Fortunately, however, the presumption of Dupleix gave that able officer an opportunity of correcting the bad impression which had been thus made, by completely defeating a French force† (1752), under Monsieur Kirjean, a nephew of the governor, who had been compelled against his better judgment, by the orders of his too ardent uncle, to hazard this engagement. The Mahrattas, on the occurrence of this success, declared their continued adherence to the cause of Mahommed Ali, and were employed with Major Lawrence in reducing the country near Pondicherry. To aid this operation, a detachment was required to attack the forts of Chingliput and Covelong; but there were no troops to form it, except two hundred European recruits just landed at Madras, who are represented as being the very refuse of

* This expedition was commanded by Major Kinneir.

† Orme, vol. i. p. 256.

the jails of London, and five hundred newly raised sepoys. These men had neither character nor discipline, and seemed so little calculated to take forts, that no officer could be expected to risk his reputation at their head: — but Clive, though in a state of very impaired health, — the consequence of his former fatigues, — volunteered to accept this unpromising command, and marched with his small and ill-composed detachment, and four twenty-four pounders, to attack Covelong*, a square fort, which, though it had no ditch, mounted thirty pieces of cannon, and was defended by fifty Europeans and three hundred sepoys.

A party having been sent in advance under Lieutenant Cooper, to take up a position in a garden six hundred yards from the fort, were attacked by the enemy: they stood for a short time, but, on Lieutenant Cooper being shot, were so dismayed that they fled with precipitation, and were with difficulty prevented by Clive from continuing their flight to Madras. The garden was retaken, a battery constructed, and a post formed on its left, near a large rock. The fire of the enemy, however, so disconcerted Clive's party, that they seemed prepared to fly at every alarm†:

* This fort is situated twenty miles south of Madras.

† Orme, vol. i. p. 263.

a shot which struck the rock, and with its splinters killed and wounded fourteen, so frightened the whole, that it was some time before they would again venture to expose themselves; and one of the advanced sentries was found, several hours afterwards, concealed in the bottom of a well!

Clive, wisely judging that shame would operate more powerfully than severity in reclaiming his men from such cowardice, exposed himself to the hottest of the enemy's fire, and his example brought them in a very few days to tolerable firmness; while their confidence in themselves and their leader was increased by the surrender of the fort, and still more by subsequent events.

The morning after Covelong was taken, Ensign Joseph Smith (a name destined to fill a large space in the future wars of Coromandel) discovered a large body of men advancing, which he justly considered to be a detachment from Chingliput to relieve Covelong. He communicated what he had seen to Clive, who, taking every precaution to prevent this corps from learning that the fort had fallen, laid an ambuscade on their route, and the concealed troops (so close and so well directed was their fire) killed one hundred men at the first volley: — many threw down their arms and fled, while the commanding officer of the corps, twenty-five Euro-

peans, and two hundred and fifty sepoys, with two pieces of cannon, were taken.

The news of this disaster soon reached Chingliput* (1752). Clive was there almost as soon, and, knowing well the influence of the impression his success had made, he immediately advanced his battery from a distance of five hundred yards, where it was first constructed, to within two hundred of the outer wall, which he soon breached as well as the inner: but there was still the ditch to be filled; for this fort, strong in some parts by the impracticability† of approach, had been fortified with great care in others; and Clive, now confident in his men, determined on an assault. The French commandant, observing his preparations, offered to capitulate on the garrison being permitted to retire with the honours of war; terms which Clive very readily granted, as the place, if obstinately defended, still possessed means of formidable resistance.

It would be difficult to find an example, in any regular army, of one so young and of such a subordinate rank as Clive, having crowded into the short space of two years such a series of successful enterprises. He was not more than twenty-seven years of age, and had only within the last year

* This fort is forty miles south-west of Covelong.

† It is completely defended on one face by a lake, and on another by a swamp covered with rice fields.

been promoted to the rank of Captain. After being distinguished on several occasions by the most resolute valour, he had displayed at Arcot, and during the operations which followed that memorable siege, all the superior qualities of a military leader. In the wisdom with which he planned, and the ability and gallantry with which he executed, those operations which so materially contributed to the defeat and capture of the French at Seringham, he evinced a calmness of courage, a clearness of judgment, and a decision of spirit, which gave confidence to his own force, and struck terror into that of the enemy: and in his last expedition against Covelong and Chingliput he showed, that where real military talent exists in the leader, there is no description of troops with which he may not command success: he can frame the machine at the moment to his purpose, while the ordinary man of routine can only employ it when prepared to his hands. Some writers, seemingly desirous of detracting from the character which Clive thus early established, would insinuate that no marked superiority of talent was exhibited in these events, and have grounded their opinion on the comparative smallness of the numbers of regular troops, and the composition of the other parts of the forces engaged in these contests; but, with those who are qualified, by experience, to

decide on this subject, and who can appreciate the difficulties these very circumstances created, Clive's reputation will rise in proportion to the smallness and unconnected nature of those means with which, at this early stage of his life, he accomplished objects so important to his country. It is not in the use of ordinary means that genius appears to most advantage: it has its amplest range, and its noblest triumph, where it labours amidst new and untried objects, and converts them to purposes for which they had always before been judged incompetent. And no commander of modern times saw more clearly, seized more powerfully, or used more successfully, than Clive, the various and often discordant materials placed within his reach. Even at this early period of his career, he diffused his own spirit around him. The troops under his direction, however dispirited before, believed that they were destined to victory and glory: and that victory and glory did invariably attend them, was owing to his genius alone.

CHAP. III.

CLIVE's health was completely broken by the fatigues he had undergone; and, as there appeared no prospect of immediate service, he determined to visit England, where the fame of his military achievements had preceded him. His father, Mr. Richard Clive, in a letter dated December 15. 1752, observes, "I was at Sir Philip Chetwood's, our neighbour in the country, when I received your welcome letter, which gave me joy not to be expressed. Since then, now I am come to London, the pleasure is repeated by the applause every one gives to your gallant actions and behaviour, and the success that hath attended you; and you are compared to no less than some of those brave generals who are gone, but left their names upon record to their glory and honour. The directors of the Company you have so faithfully served, I hear, at a public entertainment drank your health by the name of General Clive, and are pleased to say they are under great obligations to you. I waited on the three principal directors last week, in order to find out, if I could, what they proposed for you, but perceive they are desirous

to have the account the next ships bring, before they give me any positive answer, other than a general one, that they are very desirous to do you any service in their power. Your friends, among which is one of the principal directors, and my intimate acquaintance, advise that you should not leave Madras before you know how the directors propose to reward you: but this will be for your own determination, who can best judge, in the situation we are in, what is most proper to be done. You may be sure your mother and myself shall think the time long till we see you."

From his mother, Clive received at the same time one of those letters which are so precious to him who unites a disposition to cherish family ties with a devotion to his country. It would be injustice to this high-minded lady to omit a word of the sentiments she expressed on this occasion, and which showed her to be every way worthy of her son. I therefore transcribe the whole letter: —

"Dear Son,

"I cannot express the joy yours to your father gave to me. Your brave conduct, and success which Providence has blessed you with, is the talk and wonder of the public, the great joy and satisfaction of your friends; but more

particularly so to me, as it gives me hopes of seeing you much sooner than I could possibly have expected. I find some of your friends wish your longer stay in India; but I earnestly entreat you will let no motive induce you, except your honour and the peace of the country require it. Your relations are all well: four of your sisters are with me; the youngest and your two brothers are at school: your cousin Ben has no employ; he is only on half-pay as a lieutenant, lives with his father, and, I believe, wishes himself with you. We are removed to a large house in Swithin's Lane, near the post house, and hope to see you in it. May a kind Providence attend and bless you, and bring you safe to your native country, is the most sincere wish and prayer of

"Your ever affectionate mother,

(Signed) "REB. CLIVE."

"London, 16th Dec., 1752."

The state of Clive's health having compelled him to return to England, he embarked at Madras in February, 1753, immediately after his marriage to Miss Margaret Maskelyne; a marriage to which he owed much of the comfort and happiness of his future life. This lady, the daughter of Edmund Maskelyne, Esq., of Purton in Wiltshire, and sister of his friend Edmund

Maskelyne, and of the celebrated Dr. Nevil Maskelyne, afterwards Astronomer Royal, was possessed of both beauty and accomplishments. His attachment to her appears from many letters to have been very great. She continued throughout his life to enjoy his affection and regard, and survived him many years.

In the course of the same year he landed in England, after an absence of about ten years. His reception was most flattering. He was warmly welcomed by his parents and many near relations: the Court of Directors voted him a sword set with diamonds of the value of five hundred pounds, "as a token of their esteem, and of their sense of his singular services to the Company on the coast of Coromandel*;" and in society he was honoured with those elevating marks of regard, which always attend a fortunate soldier. Though but a short time in his native country, he appears to have imbibed, or rather renewed, an attachment to it, and to have formed friendships and connections, which left him without any tie in India, but the fulfilment f the public duties he had to perform in

* This vote is dated the 6th of Feb., 1754. With that delicacy and tenderness to the feelings of his old commander, Colonel Lawrence, which he always manifested, he objected to receiving this mark of distinction, unless a similar present was made to that officer; which was done accordingly.

that country, and the acquirement of sufficient fortune to maintain himself and family.

He had not enjoyed himself two years in England, when the state of affairs in India made the Court of Directors anxious for his presence in that country. He was appointed Governor of Fort St. David, with a provisional commission to succeed to the government of Madras; and the appointment was accompanied with the expression of their anxious desire that he should return as soon as possible to a country in which they deemed his services of the greatest importance. To obviate the quarrels about rank between the King's and Company's officers, which had often been attended with much obstruction to the service, the Directors applied to His Majesty's government, and obtained for him the commission of Lieutenant-Colonel in the British army; a very honourable distinction, as he was then but a young man, and only a Captain in their service.

He left England in 1755; but, instead of sailing direct to his new government, he proceeded to Bombay, where he landed on the 27th of November, with three companies of Royal Artillery and three hundred infantry, destined to form, in conjunction with the Mahrattas, part of a force for the attack of the French and their allies in the Deckan. When the project was first formed, it

had been intended that he should command this force; and he was at the time the only man in the service from whose knowledge and experience success in such a scheme could reasonably have been anticipated. But we have on this occasion an early instance of the character of that interference of the King's government, which, when dictated by narrow considerations of patronage, must defeat every measure it proposes to promote. Colonel Scott, who had sailed for India the preceding year, in the quality of Engineer-General, was, at the powerful recommendation of the Duke of Cumberland, nominated to the command of this expedition. Nevertheless, the Directors wished Clive to proceed to Bombay, in the hope that some event might occur to defeat an appointment in which they had found themselves compelled to concur. It so happened, that Colonel Scott died before the troops arrived: but a provisional treaty had been entered into* between Mr. Saunders, the Governor of Madras, and Mr. Godeheu, the Governor of Pondicherry, by which, among other articles, it had been agreed, that neither the French nor English companies should take part in any differences arising between the princes of the country. In consequence of this convention, the government of Bombay refused to adopt any proceed-

* December, 1754.

ing that could disturb the general peace of India; so that Clive lost the opportunity of opposing the celebrated Bussy on the plains of the Deckan.

Admiral Watson was lying at Bombay when Clive arrived; and the opportunity was thought excellent for employing the means which accident had left disposable, to punish the pirate Angria by the attack of Gheriah*, one of his strongholds, which lies a little more than two degrees south of Bombay, and which derived its strength from the reputed courage of its defenders, and from its site upon a rocky promontory almost surrounded by the sea.

The expedition against Gheriah was undertaken in concert with the Mahrattas; but suspicions being entertained that the latter were in communication with Angria, operations were precipitated so as to preclude them from all share in the enterprise. The Admiral having attacked and burnt the fleet of the pirate, Clive interposed his force on the land side between the fort and the Mahratta general, who had hastened to cooperate. The place soon fell†, and the booty (about ten lacs of rupees) was divided by the British forces, without admitting their allies to

* Severndroog, another fort belonging to Angria, had been taken a few months previously by Commodore James, of the Bombay marines.

† Feb. 13. 1756.

any participation. This had been settled before the expedition left Bombay, as well as the respective shares of prize-money to the officers and men. It is remarkable what attention was given at this time in India, even before operations were commenced, to adjust the relative claims to eventual booty. Councils of war were held, at which very junior officers aided, and arguments were entered into by the respective parties. The causes of this were various. Besides that spirit of plunder, and that passion for the rapid accumulation of wealth, which actuated all ranks, the undefined relations of the King's and Company's officers made such previous arrangements indispensable, to prevent those disputes, which, but for such precautions, must subsequently have occurred.

It is pleasing on this occasion to record the conduct of both the naval and military commanders. The naval officers, who formed the majority, had decreed that Lieutenant-Colonel Clive, though he commanded the land force, should only share in his army rank with a post-captain in the navy. The officers of the troops claimed for their commander an equal share with Rear-Admiral Pocock, the second in command in the navy. This pretension was stated by Clive to Admiral Watson. The latter, as jealous a defender of what he deemed the rights of the service to which he belonged, as he was careless

of his own personal interest, rejected the claim, but told Clive he would make up from his own share the difference between the colonel's and that of Admiral Pocock. Nor was this mere profession. When the prize-money was paid, he sent the difference he had promised, but it was declined. Clive said his sole object had been to satisfy the troops that he had supported the rights of their commander: they had been pleased with the admiral's conduct, and he would "never enrich himself with money taken from Mr. Watson's personal share of the capture."*

As nothing further remained to be done on the western coast, Clive proceeded to Fort St. David†, of which he took charge on the 20th June, 1756, the very day, by a remarkable coincidence, on which the Nabob of Bengal took Calcutta. Intelligence of that event was not received at Madras till the 16th of August; and on the 18th a despatch was sent to require the presence of Colonel Clive, it being in contemplation, in consequence of the state of General Lawrence's health, that he should proceed in command of the expedition destined to recover Calcutta, and re-establish the Company's affairs in Bengal.

* Vide Lieutenant-Colonel Clive's evidence, *Reports of the House of Commons*, vol. iii., and *Ives's Voyage*, p. 82.

† Vide extract of consultations, Fort St. David, June 20. 1756.

Accordingly, having been relieved at Fort St. David by Mr. A. Wynch, Colonel Clive proceeded to Madras, which he reached on the 24th of August, and assumed the command of the land forces of the expedition, the strength of which was seriously diminished by the unseasonable pretensions of Colonel Adlercron, who commanded one of His Majesty's regiments at Madras, but who was not employed on this occasion, from being deemed inexperienced in Indian warfare, and from having refused to engage to return to Madras when requested, or to surrender, for the reimbursement of the Company's losses, any part of the booty which the force under him might take. Adlercron, irritated at the appointment of Clive, stated, in reply to the requisition of the government for men, that they should have whatever number of His Majesty's troops they chose sent aboard the fleet: but added, "As I cannot answer to the King my master, nor to my own character, to remain cooped up in a garrison in a state of inaction, while any part of the forces under my command are upon actual service, I think it my duty to go along with them; and should I be of a contrary opinion, my Lieutenant-Colonel would have just cause of complaint against me, were I not to make him the first offer.

* Orme, vol. ii. p. 88.

The detachment of His Majesty's artillery is particularly allotted to attend my regiment, and I cannot consent to their being employed any where but with a part thereof; unless, therefore, we are to have the honour of assisting in this expedition, I do hereby, in the name of the King my master, demand that His Majesty's artillery, with all the stores thereto belonging, be immediately disembarked. I am sorry, gentlemen, to be obliged to observe, that I think it very extraordinary, that, after writing to me two letters, requesting me to undertake this service with the whole of His Majesty's troops, and pressing me to give the necessary orders accordingly, you should now be for putting me off upon such slight pretences."

The resolutions taken in council on the receipt of this letter were as follow: —

"Colonel Adlercron's avowal, in his letter of the 20th instant, that he could not engage to return hither upon our request, and that the Company should not have any part of the plunder that may be taken, towards the reimbursement of the immense loss they have sustained, appear to us to be reasons of the greatest importance against his going on the command; and we flatter ourselves that His Majesty will not be of opinion with Colonel Adlercron, that they are slight pretences, or that it will reflect dishonour on Colonel Adlercron to stay for the defence of a colony of so

much consequence as Madras, where, besides, by much the largest force will remain, and above two thirds of his own regiment.

" The committee are entirely of opinion, that it is necessary, for the good of the Company, that the command should be vested in an officer of the Company's, subject to our orders, and do therefore abide by the resolution of the council, that Colonel Clive proceed in that quality; but, as it will cause some delay to land His Majesty's train of artillery, which is already embarked, it is agreed to write again to Colonel Adlercron, to represent to him the bad consequences of such delay: resolving, nevertheless, that it will be disembarked if he continues to insist on it, but to protest against him for all the damage which may be caused to the Company by such delay."

The reasonings of the governor and his council were not convincing to the mind of Colonel Adlercron. He wrote a long letter in reply, mentioning all his grievances and opinions, and positively refusing to permit the train, or any part of His Majesty's forces, to proceed on the expedition.

" The dangerous situation," he observes, " in which you represent things to be here, rather confirms me in my resolution not to part with His Majesty's train; but I have already given a full answer in the letter I wrote this morning to

the general council, to which I beg leave to refer you, as you have offered nothing which can induce me to alter my sentiments. Surely, gentlemen, you are not so unreasonable as to expect that I will send away part of His Majesty's train or regiment (who are so immediately under my direction), and leave to you the nomination of the person who shall command them."

In consequence of this letter, not only the royal artillery, but His Majesty's guns and stores were disembarked; and the expedition, deprived of this strength, consisted of about two thousand four hundred men. Reinforcements, however, were promised both from Madras and Bombay.

These proceedings are not recorded with any desire to reflect on the memory of the actors in the scenes here described. A relation of such facts, however, is indispensable, to convey an idea of the difficulties which were to be overcome, and of the firmness and temper required in the situation in which Clive was now placed: but he was animated to exertion by the obstacles which presented themselves in the way of his success; and the sanguine hopes he entertained of being the instrument to avenge the cruel wrongs which his countrymen had sustained, and to redeem the state he served from the disgrace and ruin brought upon it by a barbarous enemy, are strongly expressed in the following

letter to the Court of Directors, written before he sailed from Madras: —

" Honourable Gentlemen,

" From many hands you will hear of the capture of Calcutta by the Moors, and the chain of misfortunes and losses which have happened to the Company in particular, and to the nation in general: every breast here seems filled with grief, horror, and resentment: indeed, it is too sad a tale to unfold, and I must beg leave to refer you to the general letters, consultations, and committees, which will give you a full account of this catastrophe.

" Upon this melancholy occasion, the Governor and council thought proper to summon me to this place. As soon as an expedition was resolved upon, I offered my service, which was at last accepted, and I am now upon the point of embarking on board His Majesty's squadron, with a fine body of Europeans, full of spirit and resentment for the insults and barbarities inflicted on so many British subjects.

" I flatter myself that this expedition will not end with the taking of Calcutta only; and that the Company's estate in those parts will be settled in a better and more lasting condition than ever. There is less reason to apprehend a check from the Nabob's forces, than from the nature of the

climate and country. The news of a war* may likewise interfere with the success of this expedition: however, should that happen, and hostilities be committed in India, I hope we shall be able to dispossess the French of Chandernagore, and leave Calcutta in a state of defence.

"I have a true sense of my duty to my country and the Company; and I beg leave to assure you, that nothing shall be wanting, on my part, to answer the ends of an undertaking on which so very much depends. Success on this occasion will fill the measure of my joy, as it will fix me in the esteem of those to whom I have the honour to subscribe myself, with great respect,

(Signed) "R. CLIVE."

"Fort St. George, 11th Oct., 1756."

In several private communications from Clive to his friends in England, we find the same sentiments expressed, in language which denotes the calm and determined spirit with which he went to the performance of his duty on this important occasion. Writing to Mr. Mabbot, he observes, "Providence, who is the disposer of all events, has thought proper to inflict the greatest calamity that ever happened to the English nation in these parts; I mean the loss of Calcutta, attended with

* A war was at this time expected between England and France.

the greatest mortifications to the Company, and the most barbarous and cruel circumstances to the poor inhabitants. This unhappy news has called me to the presidency; and the gentlemen thereof have thought proper to put me at the head of the expedition for the recovery of Calcutta, the Company's losses, rights, and privileges. I have that sense of duty to my country, and of my obligations to the Company (be the event what it will), there is no hardship or risk, consistent with common prudence, I will not undergo to obtain the wished-for success. I am not so apprehensive of the Nabob of Bengal's forces, as of being recalled by the news of a war, or checked in our progress by the woods and swampiness of the country, which is represented as being almost impassable for a train of artillery."

In a letter to Mr. Roger Drake, a gentleman then high in the Court of Directors, Clive writes, "A few weeks ago I was happily seated at St. David's, pleased with the thoughts of obtaining your confidence and esteem, by my application to the civil brauch of the Company's affairs, and of improving and increasing the investment; but the fatal blow given to the Company's estate at Bengal has superseded all other considerations, and I am now at this presidency upon the point of embarking on board His Majesty's squadron,

with a very considerable body of troops, to attempt the recovery of Calcutta, and to gain satisfaction from the Nabob for the losses which the Company have sustained in those parts. The re-capture of Calcutta appears no very difficult task, but our further progress for reducing the Nabob to such terms as the gentlemen of Calcutta may think satisfactory, is precarious and doubtful, from the prospect of a war, which may not allow time for such an undertaking. You may be assured I never will turn my back upon Bengal, if not ordered from thence, without trying my utmost efforts toward obtaining the desired success."

Before proceeding to the narration of the important events which took place after Clive's arrival in Bengal, it will be useful to take a short view of the situation of the affairs of the Company at this period.

By the terms of the truce between the French and English, proclaimed on the 11th of October, and followed by a provisional treaty of peace between the two Companies, signed on the 26th and 31st of December, 1754, the English gained on the coast of Coromandel all for which they had so long contended; for, by the agreement of both parties to withdraw from any further interference with the native princes, Mahommed Ali, whom they had supported through so many

vicissitudes, became the reigning * sovereign of the Carnatic.

The territorial acquisitions, and the influence established by the valour and talent of Bussy, which were deemed so valuable by Dupleix, the former Governor of Pondicherry, appear to have been only viewed by his successor Godeheu as obstacles to that peace which it was the chief object of his appointment to establish; and he discouraged all further progress to power in the Deckan.

The peace, or rather truce, obtained by such sacrifices, did not last a twelvemonth. Hostilities between the two nations were carried on as before, under the pretext of supporting the native chiefs and princes with whom the two companies were respectively allied, but with whose quarrels they had agreed not to interfere. To add to the embarrassment which this state of affairs produced, accounts were received at Madras, on the 12th of November, 1756, that war had broken out between France and England; and Clive had not sailed above a month, when a letter from the Go-

* It is to be observed, that though the French gave upon this occasion their support to the pretensions of their favourite Nabob, yet Mahommed Ali was not at that time acknowledged by Salabut Jung, then subadar of the Deckan, his immediate superior: and it was only at the peace of Paris, in 1763, that he was acknowledged by the French government.

vernor and Council of Fort St. George, after suggesting an attack on the French settlement of Chandernagore, entreated his early return, with as many of his troops as could be spared, to protect them from the dangers likely to result from the expected arrival of a French armament from Europe.

The history of the events which brought ruin on the settlement of Calcutta is short and disgraceful. The kingdom of Bengal, which, with Orissa, had been, for fifteen years, subject to the able and active rule of Aliverdi Khan, was now* governed by his grand nephew Suraj-u-Dowlah, a youth, who, to all the effeminacy and luxurious habits of an eastern prince, added the greatest violence of temper, and an unrestrained indulgence of his passions. The commercial settlement of Calcutta, which had been protected by his predecessor, became an early object of his attack. Whether he was tempted by its known weakness and reputed wealth, or by a desire to expel the English from Bengal, is a matter of little moment. The pretexts on which his aggressions were grounded are too slight to merit

* Aliverdi Khan died on the 9th of April, 1756; and Suraj-u-Dowlah, having been nominated successor, mounted the throne without opposition. The name of this prince was Mirza Mahmud, but he is best known by his title of Suraj-u-Dowlah, which means "the sun of the state."

consideration. He first accused the English of an intention to fortify Calcutta. This was disproved. Then they were charged with giving protection to one of his subjects* who had fled with great treasure. The person of this subject, he was informed, should be reserved for his pleasure; and proof was offered, that the treasure he was said to have fled with had no existence. But the young and rapacious tyrant was only to be satisfied by the plunder of the English merchants, and all that belonged to them. This was shown by his conduct at Cossimbazar. Having prevailed upon the chief, Mr. Watts, to visit him, he made him prisoner, and afterwards attacked and gained possession of that fortified factory. But the great object of his ambition was the capture of Calcutta. When he approached that city†, a feeble effort was made at defence; after which it was decided that it would be expedient to retreat; but no orders were issued to render this measure regular or effective to its object of

* The person the Nabob alluded to was Kishendass, the son of the late Dewan of the Nabob of Dacca, who visited Calcutta on his way to Juggernaut; and as he was strongly recommended to Mr. Drake, the President of Calcutta, by Mr. Watts, the chief of Cossimbazar, on account of services rendered by his family to the Company, he was treated with kindness and attention.

† The outposts of Calcutta were attacked on the 18th of June, 1756.

saving the persons and property of the European part of the population, by embarking them on board the vessels lying near the town. The consequence was, that when embarkation commenced, every one tried to secure his own personal safety by getting on board how and when he could. The alarm created by this confusion spread to the ships, and they began to drop down the river. This was no sooner perceived, than every boat was filled; and among those who fled to join the ships on this memorable occasion, were some who were bound to remain by every call of public duty. Signals were made from the fort to the ships to return, but they were not heeded; and, though two days elapsed before the capture, not a boat came to save the few who, either from a sense of duty, or from not possessing the means of escape, had remained in the fort. It is difficult to believe that amongst so many Englishmen, none were found disposed to adventure for the safety of their countrymen. "Never, perhaps," says Orme, "was such an opportunity of performing an heroic action so ignominiously neglected; for a single sloop, with fifteen brave men on board, might, in spite of all the efforts of the enemy, have come up, and, anchoring under the fort, have carried away all who suffered in the dungeon."*

* Orme, vol. ii. p. 78.

As the Governor* and commandant† of the troops were among the fugitives, those who were left behind chose Mr. Holwell as their chief. Soon finding that resistance was impossible, he desired to surrender; but, before he could obtain an answer, the enemy stormed and made themselves master of the fort. Suraj-u-Dowlah, when Mr. Holwell was carried into his presence with his hands bound, directed them to be untied, and spoke to him in a manner calculated to give him hopes of protection: nothing, at least, indicated the fate that awaited this gentleman and his unfortunate companions; and indeed, as the Nabob had no reason for desiring their death, we cannot suppose that it was by his command they were, on the night of the day they were made prisoners, thrust into that prison emphatically called the Black Hole, from which, of a hundred and forty-six persons, only twenty-three came out alive.

"Some of our company," says Mr. Cooke‡, "expired very soon after being put in: others grew mad, and having lost their senses, died in a high delirium. All we could urge to the guard set over us, could not prevail upon them either to set us at liberty, or separate us into different prisons; which we desired, and offered money to obtain; but to no purpose: and when we

* Mr. Drake. † Captain Minchin.

‡ Vide Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 144.

were released at eight o'clock the next morning, only twenty-three came out alive."

The indignation excited against Suraj-u-Dowlah in the breast of every Englishman, on account of the murder of these persons, was just; even though he never intended * to perpetrate so cruel an action.

Wrapt in proud indifference as to what befel those unfortunate beings, whom fortune had thrown into his power, the tyrant was not to be approached with the tale of their unexampled

* Mr. Mill, by his quotation from Seir Mutaquerin, and his observations upon the former state of prisons in England and India, appears desirous not only of palliating the guilt of the Nabob and his servants, but of throwing a share of the blame upon the unhappy sufferers: "Some search," he observes, "was made for a convenient apartment, but none was found; upon which, information was obtained of a place which the English themselves had employed as a prison, and into this, without further inquiry, they were impelled. It was unhappily a small ill-aired and unwholesome dungeon called the Black Hole; and the English had their own practice to thank, for suggesting it to the officers of the subadar as a fit place of confinement." — Mill, vol. iii. p. 149. Though I refrain from commenting on the tone in which the author quoted treats this memorable catastrophe, I must directly question the justice of the conclusions he has drawn from his own premises. Assuredly the use of a room of twenty feet square, with two small windows, as a prison for one, two, three, or ten prisoners, can be no justication for forcing, at the point of the sword, 146 captives into this inadequate space; much less for keeping them there, when their sufferings became so dreadful, and the death of almost all certain.

sufferings, at the moment when they might have been alleviated; and he never showed any sense of remorse when the dreadful catastrophe was narrated to him, nor evinced any resentment against those who had not only driven their captives into the dark and narrow place of destruction, but had turned a deaf ear to the earnest prayers and the dying groans of the unhappy sufferers.

Two fitter instruments than Watson and Clive could not have been chosen to avenge their country, and to re-establish the interests of the Company in Bengal; and their efforts were warmly seconded by Mr. Pigot, Governor of Madras, who gave them all the assistance he could, to promote the success of a service of vital importance to the prosperity, and indeed to the very existence, of the Company in India.

The expedition sailed from Madras the 16th of October, and consisted of five of His Majesty's ships and five of the Company's, having on board nine hundred European infantry, and fifteen hundred sepoys. Five hundred more sepoys were expected from Bombay. (A. D. 1756.) All the fleet, with the exception of two vessels, the "Cumberland" * and "Marlborough †," on

* The "Cumberland" seventy-four had Sir G. Pocock's flag on board.

† The "Marlborough" Indiaman carried a large proportion of the troops and stores.

board of which were a considerable proportion of the troops, had reached Fulta * by the 22d of December, where they found the fugitives from Calcutta.

Major Kilpatrick, also an officer of high reputation, was at that place. He had, it appears from his letter to Clive of the 5th of August, arrived some weeks after the capture of Calcutta; but did not think it advisable (as he states in the same letter), until supported from Madras, to attempt the recovery of the settlement, having "only a handful" of men, four pieces of artillery, and a very small quantity of ammunition.

Clive appears, from letters to Major Kilpatrick, dated the 23d of December, to have been so unwell as to have committed to that officer the charge of preparations for immediate advance upon the small fort of Budge-Budge †, the road to which was through a low swampy country, covered with jungle and underwood.

Though two hundred and fifty of his small European force, and four hundred and thirty sepoys, with almost all the artillery, military

* A village on the left bank of the river Hooghly, twenty miles in a straight direction below Calcutta, but more than double that distance by water.

† Situated on the left bank of the river Hooghly, ten miles below Calcutta in a straight line, but double that number by the windings of the river.

stores, &c., were on board the two missing ships, Clive nevertheless determined to advance: but it appears from his private letter to Mr. Pigot (dated the 8th of January, 1757), that the march of the small body of troops by land was against his opinion. "You will find," he observes in this letter, "by the return, that our loss in the skirmish near Budge-Budge was greater than could well be spared, if such skirmishes were to be often repeated. You must know, our march from Moidapoor to the northward of Budge-Budge was much against my inclinations. I applied to the Admiral for boats to land us, at the place we arrived at, after sixteen hours' march by land. The men suffered hardships not to be described: it was four in the afternoon when we decamped from Moidapoor, and we did not arrive off Budge-Budge till past eight next morning: at nine, the grenadier company and all the sepoys were despatched to the fort, where I heard Captain Coote* was landed with the King's troops. At ten, Monichund, the Governor of Calcutta, attacked us with between two and three thousand horse and foot, and was worsted.† The

* This officer (afterwards the celebrated Sir Eyre Coote) commanded a company of H. M. 49th on board the flag ship.

† The grenadier volunteers and sepoys had been pushed

people of the country raise fabulous reports about the killed and wounded; but there is reason to believe, from the smartness of the fire, and the nearness of the enemy, some of whom were within twenty yards, one hundred and fifty might be killed and wounded, and with them four of the principal jemmadars and an elephant. Monichund himself received a shot in his turban. Our two field pieces were of little or no service to us, having neither tubes nor portfires, and wrong carriages sent with them from Fort St.

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as near the fort as they could be, under cover, to be ready for an assault. The remainder had been halted in a hollow plain, to intercept the garrison in the event of an attempt at retreat. No enemy was believed to be near, except in the fort of Budge-Budge. The consequence was a surprise, the bad effects of which were only remedied by Clive's presence of mind and courage. He has been censured for not using more precaution; but having only landed seven days, and being ill, he must have depended upon others for intelligence, and he justly complains of their want of it. The nature of the country, however, is such, as to offer to almost any numbers the power of concealing their advance.

It has further been stated, that "if the enemy's cavalry had advanced and charged at the same time that the infantry began to fire, it is not improbable that the war would have been concluded on the very first trial of hostilities."—Orme, vol. i. p. 124. In answer to this remark, there is one single fact to be stated;—the thick jungle which concealed the approach of the infantry was impervious to cavalry, who had no means of advancing except through openings, where they must have been seen, and the possibility of surprise defeated.

David; indeed we still labour under every disadvantage in the world, for want of the Marlborough. It seems the enemy were encamped within two miles of us, and we ignorant of the matter: so much for the intelligence of the country.

"I cannot take upon me to give my sentiments about our future success against the Nabob in the open field: the little affair above mentioned was attended with every disadvantage on our side: a number of houses, jungles, bushes, &c. served as a cover for the enemy—all our sepoys and the choice of our Europeans absent—our cannon in a manner useless. Indeed I fear we shall labour under many of these disadvantages when attacked by the Nabob, and I take it for granted that he will be down before the Cumberland and Marlborough can arrive. As yet, there appears but little probability of getting draught bullocks, without which we cannot move."

Calcutta, which offered no resistance, was taken possession of on the 2d of January, 1757, by Admiral Watson, who, on the 3d, delivered it over to the Company's representatives. That jealous claim to superiority on the part of His Majesty's commanders by sea and land, which created difficulty in every conjunct operation, was evinced on this occasion in a manner that excited an in-

dignation in the mind of Clive which he could not conceal.

" Between friends," he observes, in the letter to Mr. Pigot above quoted, " I cannot help regretting that ever I undertook this expedition. The mortifications I have received from Mr. Watson and the gentlemen of the squadron, in point of prerogative, are such, that nothing but the good of the service could induce me to submit to them. The morning the enemy quitted Calcutta, a party of our sepoys entered the fort at the same time with a detachment from the ships, and were ignominiously thrust out: upon coming near the fort myself, I was informed that there were orders that none of the Company's officers or troops should have entrance. This, I own, enraged me to such a degree, that I was resolved to enter if possible, which I did, though not in the manner maliciously reported, by forcing the sentries; for they suffered us to pass very patiently upon being informed who I was. At my entrance, Captain Coote presented me with a commission from Admiral Watson, appointing him Governor of Fort William, which I knew not a syllable of before: and it seems this dirty underhand contrivance was carried on in the most secret manner, under a pretence that I intended the same thing, which, I declare, never entered my thoughts. This affair was compromised, by

the Admiral consenting that I should be Governor, and that the Company's troops should remain in the fort. The next day the Admiral delivered up the fort to the Company's representatives in the King's name."

According to Mr. Ives *, who must be supposed to have given a faithful record of Admiral Watson's actions, as he was surgeon to the flag ship, and honoured with his commander's confidence, Captain King was sent, the moment Calcutta surrendered, to take possession of that fort in His Majesty's name; and in a few minutes afterwards it was garrisoned by a party of King's troops serving on board the flag-ship, under the command of Captain Coote, to whom specific instructions were given, not to deliver up his command till further orders. Clive, who had invested the fort on the land face, immediately entered it, and claimed the command on the ground of his commission as Lieutenant-Colonel in His Majesty's service, and as senior officer on shore. Captain Coote refused to recognise his authority, as he considered himself acting under the specific orders of Admiral Watson. Clive persisted; and, to prevent extremities, a message was sent to Admiral Watson, who, after hearing Clive's pretensions, sent Captain Speke to inform

* Vide Ives's Voyage, p. 102.

him, that if he did not evacuate the fort immediately, he would fire upon him. Clive said he would not answer for the consequences, but would not give up the command. Reflection, however, seems to have altered this resolution, for I find a note from Captain Speke, stating that he had communicated to the Admiral Clive's offer of evacuating the fort, providing he had assurances of having afterwards the command. This was acceded to; the fort remained, during the day on which it was captured, under the Admiral, and was next day, as has been before mentioned, made over to the Company.

Clive, in the letter before quoted to the Governor of Madras, notices the feelings of dissatisfaction which his independent powers had produced in the minds of the gentlemen belonging to the settlement of Calcutta, whom he describes as callous to every feeling but that of their losses. His sentiments upon this occasion are stated with that severity and careless boldness, which made him so many enemies, but which, nevertheless, continued through life to mark all his communications on points where he considered that private feelings and interests had interfered with the performance of public duties.

"The gentlemen here," he states, "seem much dissatisfied at the authority I am vested with. It would be contradicting my own sentiments, if

I was not to acknowledge that I still preserve the opinion that the gentlemen of Madras could not have taken a step more prudent, or more consistent with the Company's interests: for I am sorry to say, the loss of private property, and the means of recovering it, seem to be the only objects which take up the attention of the Bengal gentlemen. As an instance, I shall only mention the expeditions to Dacca, which you may remember to have heard of a little before we sailed. It was settled that the Company should defray the expenses, and that what was taken should be divided among the sufferers of Calcutta in proportion to their losses; the sufferers repaying the Company what might be advanced on that account. I would have you guard against every thing these gentlemen can say; for, believe me, they are bad subjects and rotten at heart, and will stick at nothing to prejudice you and the gentlemen of the committee; indeed, how should they do otherwise, when they have not spared one another? I shall only add, their conduct at Calcutta finds no excuse, even among themselves; and that the riches of Peru and Mexico should not induce me to dwell among them."

The correspondence which has been noticed between Admiral Watson and Clive, and between the latter and the select committee at Calcutta, is of consequence, as it exhibits the

obstacles with which Clive had to struggle at this critical period of his life, and of the interests of his country in India. It is, however, to be observed, that notwithstanding the pertinacity and violence on points of professional claims, which Admiral Watson exhibited, there was a redeeming honesty and zeal in that gallant seaman, which gave ample pledge that the public service would always be preferred by him to every other consideration; and though Clive showed occasional fits of spleen at the conduct of the Admiral, the whole course of his correspondence, public and private, proves that he entertained the highest respect and admiration for his character.

The situation of Clive was at this period most difficult. He found it more easy to deal with the pretensions and prejudices of Admiral Watson, than with the weak and disunited select committee of Bengal. In answer* to a letter from the latter, demanding that he should surrender the power with which he was vested, and place himself under them, he observed, "I do not intend to make use of my power for acting separately from you, without you reduce me to the necessity of so doing; but as far as concerns the means of executing these powers, you will

* Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Clive to select committee, of date 20th of January, 1757.

excuse me, gentlemen, if I refuse to give them up: I cannot do it without forfeiting the trust reposed in me by the Select Committee of Fort St. George.

"It does not become me, as an individual, to give my opinion, whether the conduct of the gentlemen of Fort St. George has been faulty or not; that point must be determined by our superiors."

After occupying Calcutta, the British commanders, to take advantage, as Clive states *, of the consternation caused by their rapid progress, sent a naval and military force to attack Hooghley. I transcribe from Orme† the following account of this operation: —

"Mr. Drake, notwithstanding his adversities, had retained some correspondents, and the Company's money some spies, from whom he received intelligence, as soon as he arrived at Calcutta, that the town of Hooghley was in great consternation, and that it would be some time before the Nabob's army would reach from Moorshedabad; upon which the Committee agreed to attack Hooghley without delay. The twenty-gun ship, the sloop of war, and three other vessels, were appointed for this service; and on board

* Clive's letters to the Governor of Madras, 8th January, 1757.

† Vol. ii. p. 126.

of them were embarked one hundred and fifty Europeans, being those of Adlercron's regiment, with two hundred sepoys.* They sailed on the 4th of January, and hoped to reach Hooghley in one tide; but the twenty-gun ship struck upon a sand-bank, which stopped their progress for five days. On the 10th, they arrived at Hooghley. This town lieth about twenty miles above Calcutta, adjoining to the north part of the Dutch settlement of Chinsurah, from whence it extends three miles on the bank of the river. At the northern extremity of the town is a fort, which was at this time garrisoned by two hundred men: three thousand more had been sent from Moorshedabad; but these retreated as soon as the English troops landed, remaining, however, within a few miles. The vessels battered the fort until night; and although the breach was scarcely practicable, it was determined to storm it before break of day. A false attack was made at the main gate; whilst Captain Coote, with the other division, accompanied by some sailors, mounted the breach before they were discovered by the garrison; who no sooner saw the English on the ramparts, than all of them quitted their posts, and fled out at the lesser gate. Three

* Major Kilpatrick and Captain Eyre Coote commanded the King's and Company's troops. The naval armament was commanded by Admiral Watson.

Europeans and ten sepoys were killed in the attack. On the 12th, Captain Coote, with fifty Europeans and one hundred sepoys, marched to Baudel, a large village three miles north of the fort, where they destroyed several granaries of rice; and in their turn were surrounded in the village by the fugitive garrison, and the troops which had been sent from Moorshedabad, from whom they disengaged themselves without losing a man. On the 16th, a party proceeded in boats some miles to the northward, and destroyed several more granaries on each side of the river; and on the 19th, the Europeans with the smaller vessels returned to Calcutta."

The account of the expedition against Hooghley is confirmed by every contemporary writer. The booty taken was estimated by Clive at a lac and a half of rupees (15,000*l.*). The reduction of this important fort, the destruction and capture of the enemy's property, and the discomfiture of their troops, whilst they avenged the wrongs which Suraj-u-Dowlah had inflicted upon the English, were calculated to impress that prince with a just sense of their power, and of their determination to use it, for the purpose of compelling him to make reparation for his unprovoked aggressions. They concluded (and his character and conduct justified the conclusion) that it was not by conciliating,

but by alarming him, that they could obtain future exemption from his attacks. What had occurred gave good grounds for the belief they entertained. Subsequent events proved its correctness.*

* It is with pain I read, in the page of a modern historian, the following passage[a]:—"The English were very desirous to make their peace with that formidable ruler (Suraj-u-Dowlah); but the capture of Hooghley, undertaken solely with a view to plunder, had so augmented his rage, that he was not in a frame of mind to receive from them any proposition." I rejoice to state, I have hitherto searched in vain for the facts that could warrant so unqualified an imputation upon the fame and reputation of Admiral Watson, Colonel Clive, and the other naval and military officers, detached in command of the force employed on this occasion; and, until proof is produced of their having been actuated by the sordid motives here ascribed to them, I cannot give credit to the unsupported opinion of any author, however respectable.

Orme states, that Suraj-u-Dowlah was exasperated at the capture of Hooghley (as, no doubt, such a despot would be at any operation which implied a defiance of his power by a nation he had contemned and injured); but that clear and able historian, to whom his country is so deeply indebted for a minute narration of the facts connected with the early establishment of her power in India, has not one word in his page that can justify the opinions Mr. Mill expresses as to the motives of their attack.

I have the sincerest personal respect for Mr. Mill: I admire his accuracy, his industry, and indefatigable research; but our conclusions from the same premises often differ most widely. In this work, I shall have frequent occasion to

[a] Mill's British India, vol. ii. p. 128.

Clive's letters in January communicate to the Madras government information of the capture of Hooghley, and of the completion of the works to strengthen Calcutta. He also informs them, that the Select Committee of Bengal had confided to him and Admiral Watson all corre-

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claim that liberty of a free expression of my sentiments, which he so properly uses towards those who have written on the same subjects as himself. This will oblige me to question some of his assertions and opinions, which, however positive and unqualified, appear to me neither supported by arguments nor borne out by facts. I am aware of my own defects, and have laboured to amend them; I also acknowledge that early impressions, and the occupations of my life, may give a bias to my judgment: but no human mind is free from prejudices, and those of the closet author are not the fewest in number, or the easiest to be subdued. With a full sense of my own disadvantages, I confess that I am not convinced, by the laboured and metaphysical preface to Mr. Mill's History, that local knowledge, and an acquaintance with the languages, habits, and characters of the nations of whom I, and others similarly circumstanced, have treated on this and other occasions, are disqualifications for the tasks we have attempted. At all events, our efforts may be useful in collecting facts for more critical and philosophical historians. Though we do not withhold those opinions which our experience has led us to adopt, our chief purpose is to inform — theirs to speculate. We are satisfied if we can lay before our readers a true picture of the scenes we describe. They have what they deem a higher object; and the facts of their volumes are often rendered subservient to the propagation of their general principles and abstract theories.

spondence with the Nabob, who was advancing towards Calcutta, making professions of an amicable disposition, and offering to make restitution of property, provided Mr. Drake were removed from the management of the Company's affairs in Bengal.

Clive, at this period, cherished sanguine hopes of an early settlement; and it appears, both from his public and private letters, that he was most solicitous to obey the instructions of the Madras Government, by returning to that Presidency the moment he could do so without the most imminent hazard to the public interests.

"Mr. Watson," he observes*, "has not yet come to any resolution about his departure; and I fear it will be difficult for me to leave this place without his concurrence and assistance: however, nothing but the prospect of a speedy and honourable peace will induce him to stay much longer; and you may be assured I shall accompany him, unless something of the like nature happens, so as to give hopes of a peace being soon concluded, greatly to the honour and advantage of the Company. Be assured, gentlemen, I shall follow your instructions, and not draw out

* Letter to the Hon. G. Pigot, Esq. and Select Committee of Fort St. George, dated Camp, Barnague Plain, January 28. 1757.

the war to length, on any consideration whatever."

In his private letter of the 25th of January, to Mr. Pigot, he says, "I need not represent to you the immense consequence of Bengal to the Company; and, while there is a prospect of concluding matters, either by a treaty, or by a general battle, which, I think, cannot be far off, I am persuaded you would not approve of my leaving every thing unfinished, in a sudden and abrupt manner.

"If we cannot conclude every thing by the end of March, I will give it up, and content myself with leaving Calcutta in a defensible state. By the return you will see, exclusive of the King's troops and artillery, I have not above three hundred European rank and file fit for duty; so that, if the Bombay troops don't arrive, I cannot possibly bring with me more than the grenadier company, and fifty of the train, exclusive of the King's. The sepoys must be left, of which you have no want on the coast. Fort William cannot be left with a less garrison than three hundred military and train fit for duty."

In the postscript to the same letter, he observes, "The Admiral has not wanted a number of people to advise him to pay no manner of attention to any representations, but what come from the gentlemen here; and that the gentlemen of

the coast cannot be judges of what is fit for the interest of the Company in these parts. He is very desirous of getting away by the latter end of next month, but has been persuaded that he is so much concerned in honour to see matters concluded, that he swears he will stay till September, if it be necessary. You will easily conclude how difficult it will be for me to get from hence without his consent and assistance. I do assure you I believe the Nabob desires peace most earnestly; and I have told the gentlemen very plainly, that if he will give such terms as are consistent with the interest of the Company, and no other, all private satisfaction must be laid aside."

The desire which Clive, at this period, entertained to return to Madras, and the causes by which he was detained, are strongly expressed in his letter* to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors.

"The gentlemen of the Committee of Fort Saint George, on advice of the war with France, immediately despatched letters to me directing my return to the coast, as early as possible, with what troops could be spared; which, considering the reinforcement from Bombay, they hoped would be nearly as many as I brought with me.

* Dated Camp, on Barnague Plain, 1st February, 1757.

Further advices from them, dated 2d and 11th December, mention Monsieur Bussy's having set out from Hyderabad on the 16th November, and advanced towards the sea-coast with about one thousand men, having left one hundred with Salabut Jung. They conclude his destination is for Pondicherry, there to join other troops expected from the Islands, and make up a formidable force for action in the Carnatic; therefore urging my return with as many troops as possible, both of the Madras and Bombay detachments: for that all schemes of action in Bengal must be dropped for the present, and our whole force bent against the collected strength of the French on the coast.

"I have no accounts myself from the Chief of Vizagapatam: but, by Mr. Pocock's letter to Mr. Watson, and the information of Lieut. Rumbold, arrived from thence, I understand that Monsieur Bussy gave out that he was coming to settle the affairs of this province; but that, by the direction of his march, he seemed to have a design upon Vizagapatam, and the English settlements in that neighbourhood. That when he was within about six days' march of Vizagapatam, and heard of the Cumberland's arrival there, he detached Monsieur Law with about three hundred Europeans to Masulipatam, to defend it against any attempts from that ship, as

it is supposed; and he himself halted with the rest of his army, consisting, it is thought, of about four or five hundred Europeans, and a very large black force, both foot and horse. The accident, therefore, of the Cumberland's falling in with Vizagapatam has saved your northern settlements for the present; which, I fear, on her coming away, must fall a sacrifice to the superiority of the French forces in that quarter.

"All circumstances concur to make me wish a speedy accommodation in this province, both with the Nabob and French; and it is my ardent desire to be able to embark for the coast this month, with some of the troops; but it is hardly to be expected that matters will be sufficiently settled to admit of it. The Admiral declares he is ready to stay till September if your affairs require it; and it will be impossible for me to return without the squadron. Indeed, I am myself so sensible of the consequence which the trade of this province is of to the Company, that I think I ought not, on any account, to draw off part of the troops, while a fair prospect remains of a speedy and advantageous conclusion of affairs, either by force of arms or a treaty. Whenever we return, I will endeavour to prevail on the Admiral to call at Vizagapatam, to know the state of the coast, and whether our services will be necessary in that neighbourhood."

How little Clive contemplated any schemes of wealth, or personal aggrandizement, as likely to result from the scene in which he was engaged, may be judged from a letter to his father written at this period: — "I wrote you last," he observes, "by the Chesterfield, and acquainted you with my being just ready to set out upon the expedition to Bengal. I have now the pleasure to inform you, that all are safely arrived, and that success has hitherto attended our arms by sea and land. Calcutta is retaken, and fortified; and, some time ago, the second city in this province (Hooghley) was taken by storm and plundered.

"We are encamped with our little army; and the Nabob is at the head of forty thousand men to give us battle. I am in hopes every thing will be concluded to the Company's advantage, though not in so glorious a manner as I could wish. For more particulars I must refer you to Mr. Mabbot.

"It is not possible to describe the distresses of the inhabitants of this once opulent and populous town. It must be many years before it is restored to its former grandeur. It is computed the private losses amount to upwards of two millions sterling.

"I enjoy my health better than could be expected, and think my nervous complaint decreases. Mrs. Clive was well when I last heard from her, which was the 4th of last month.

"Colonel Lawrence is Governor of St. David's during my absence. I believe it would be no difficult matter to get appointed from home Governor of this place; but it would be neither agreeable to me, nor to my advantage. I heartily wish, in these perilous and uncertain times, all my money was in England; for I do not think it safe here: no one knows what the event of war may be in these parts. My loss by the capture of Calcutta is not less than 2500*l.*; so that hitherto I am money out of pocket by my second trip to India. I hope the end will crown all."

The arrival of the Nabob, with a large army, in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta, put an end, for the moment, to all considerations but that of a speedy settlement with him. He continued to profess friendship; but the delays and evasions of his ministers, and the position he occupied, not only led to doubts of his sincerity, but threatened the safety of Clive's small force, and with it the city of Calcutta. Clive persevered, however, in his efforts to effect an amicable settlement; and, in concert with his second in command, Major Kilpatrick, publicly stated his opinion, that, while the Committee endeavoured to obtain better terms, they should not hazard a renewal of hostilities by rejecting those with which the Nabob appeared ready to comply. The sentiments they gave upon this

occasion are too remarkable and too honourable to the individuals to be omitted.

"Upon the whole," they stated, "we think the conditions highly honourable and advantageous to the Company. It would give us great pleasure, as being considerable sufferers ourselves, if terms advantageous to private persons could be obtained likewise; but our present insignificant strength, the situation of affairs upon the coast, the absolute recal of Col. Clive with the greatest part of the forces, oblige us to give it as our opinion, that, by insisting upon terms still more advantageous, we expose the Company to the risk of losing those already granted them, having neither time nor the means of making the Nabob comply, should he retreat. We were the more confirmed in that way of thinking, as Runjut Roy the Seit's * Vakeel, who has through the whole course of this negotiation undertaken the Company's affairs, in his last letters to Col. Clive, declares that, if the last articles signed by the Nabob are not satisfactory, he will interfere no more in the Company's business, but let war take its course."

The hopes indulged of an amicable disposition on the part of Suraj-u-Dowlah were soon dis-

* Jugget Seit, here alluded to, was at the head of a great banking-house, and, from his immense wealth and credit, had much influence in the country.

pelled by the military movements of that prince. He had, however, to deal with an opponent not to be deceived. The moment Clive found that, from part of the Nabob's army having entered the city, and the remainder shutting up all the avenues of its approach, his own followers were deserting, and he was likely to be cut off from all supplies, he determined to bring matters to a crisis. On the 4th of February, two gentlemen were deputed to the Nabob, to request, if his intentions were friendly, that he would withdraw. The haughty manner in which his envoys were received, and the refusal to comply with his request, made Clive instantly determine on an attack.

"As I now plainly perceived," he observes in his letter to the Secret Committee, dated 22d February, 1757, "that he only meant to amuse us, and that the little opposition he had received served rather to elate his hopes than incline him to moderate measures, I determined to attack him the next morning before daybreak, while two thirds of his army were still encamped without the Mahratta ditch; for when they had once passed and got into the streets of the town, it would be too late to attempt it. Another pressing reason for the immediate execution of this enterprise, notwithstanding the smallness of my force, was the sudden distress we found ourselves in,

upon the approach of the Nabob's army, by a general desertion of our workmen, coolies, and servants, the breaking up of our market, and no provisions to be had but what were supplied from the fort by water; in which condition we could not have continued long, but must have retreated into the fort with disgrace. I therefore desired Admiral Watson to assist me with five or six hundred seamen, principally for drawing the artillery and carrying ammunition, which he readily complied with; and, about three o'clock in the morning, I marched out with nearly my whole force, leaving only a few Europeans, with two hundred new-raised bucksarees, to guard our camp. About six, we entered the enemy's camp in a thick fog, and crossed it in about two hours, with considerable execution. Had the fog cleared up, as it usually does, about eight o'clock, when we were entire masters of the camp without the ditch, the action must have been decisive; instead of which it thickened, and occasioned our mistaking the way. I avoid troubling you with the particulars of this undertaking, as they are fully set down in my journal of military occurrences."

Clive had wished to avoid hostilities, from a desire not to hazard the advantages which had been obtained, and from the great disparity of numbers. While his force consisted of one

thousand three hundred and fifty Europeans and eight hundred sepoys, that of the enemy exceeded forty thousand men; but, in the situation in which he found himself placed, he had no option betwixt the attack he made and a disgraceful termination of the enterprise. His was not a mind to hesitate under such circumstances. He instantly formed his plan to surprise the Nabob's camp, by marching at three o'clock in the morning to make his first effort against a train of heavy artillery, and, after spiking them, to push for the head-quarters of the prince: but his little army, after penetrating through the multitude of its opponents, became, at daybreak, so enveloped in thick fog, that the road was missed; and when the fog cleared, Clive, who found himself at a distance from the point of his intended attack, had to sustain a very sharp action with a part of the Nabob's army, in which he lost, besides two field pieces, one hundred and twenty Europeans and one hundred sepoys, a great proportion of his small force. Though the success of this attack, owing to the accident of the fog, was not so complete as it otherwise would have been, all the effects upon which Clive had calculated were produced. The alarmed Nabob left the town next day, and encamped on a plain within sight of the English troops. Preparations were making for another

attack; but Suraj-u-Dowlah made overtures for peace, and Clive was too anxious for that object not to attend to them, though advised to the contrary by Admiral Watson; who, in a private note, written in the strong language and with the characteristic bluntness of a British seaman, expressed serious doubts of the Nabob's sincerity, and recommended another attack. "I am now fully convinced," the Admiral observes, "the Nabob's letter was only to amuse us, in order to cover his retreat and gain time till he is reinforced, which may be attended with very fatal consequences. For my own part, I was of opinion, that attacking his rear when he was marching off, and forcing him to abandon his cannon, was a most necessary piece of service to bring him to an accommodation; for till he is well thrashed, don't, Sir, flatter yourself he will be inclined to peace. Let us, therefore, not be overreached by his politics, but make use of our arms, which will be much more prevalent than any treaties or negotiations. In order to this, I have sent Captain Speke to talk with you on this subject. I think, too, it might not be amiss, were you to consult some of your own officers on the same occasion. You will pardon the liberty I take on this particular, when I assure you, I will do the utmost of my endeavours to assist you."

Clive was not induced by this advice to depart

from the course he had determined to pursue. He anticipated that what had passed would dispose the Nabob to peace; and he dreaded that, by driving him to despair, he might hurry him into an alliance with the French at Chandernagore, whose European force was nearly equal to the English, and who had just heard of the breaking out of war between the two nations in Europe. The events proved he was not mistaken in his conclusion as to the probable conduct of Suraj-u-Dowlah. That prince no longer hesitated to sign a treaty, by which he restored the English at Calcutta to all the privileges they had formerly enjoyed under the imperial firman, or mandate, gave up the villages he had seized, permitted their merchandise to pass custom-free, agreed to their fortifying Calcutta, allowed them to establish a mint, and engaged that all goods taken from their factories should be restored, and that money compensation should be given for such as were damaged, plundered, or lost.

This treaty was concluded on the 9th of February, and three days afterwards the Nabob entered into another agreement with Clive, by which the English engaged to look upon the Nabob's enemies as their own, and to grant him any aid in their power.

Various opinions were formed of the policy of this peace. Clive, in a private letter to Mr.

Payne, Chairman of the Court of Directors, points out, with great force, the grounds on which he acted.

" If I had only consulted the interest and reputation of a soldier, the conclusion of this peace might easily have been suspended. I know, at the same time, there are many who think I have been too precipitate in the conclusion of it; but surely those who are of this opinion never knew, that the delay of a day or two might have ruined the Company's affairs, by the junction of the French with the Nabob, which was on the point of being carried into execution. They never considered the situation of affairs on the coast, and the positive orders sent me by the gentlemen there, to return with the major part of the forces at all events; they never considered that, with a war upon the coast, and in the province of Bengal at the same time, a trading company could not subsist without a great assistance from the government; and, last of all, they never considered, that a long war, attended through the whole course of it with success, and many great actions, ended at last with the expense of more than fifty lacs of rupees to the Company.

" Believe me, Sir, I have constantly had this consideration in view, and my conduct has been always regulated agreeably to it. I can further say, I never undertook an expedition attended

with half so many disagreeable circumstances as this: the natural jealousy subsisting between sea and land service has given me much uneasiness; I have suffered many mortifications; the independent power given me by the gentlemen of the committee at Madras has created me many enemies; and, lastly, that attention which, by my public station, I owe to the interest of the Company, in preference to that of private individuals, has not passed by unreflected upon. I am a very considerable sufferer myself; and I can affirm with great truth and sincerity, that I have left no means untried with the Nabob, when the Company's interest was not immediately concerned, to induce him to consider the unhappy people at Calcutta, and he has often promised to do it.

"Nothing harsh, ungenerous, or uncharitable shall fall from my pen; at the same time, in justice to the Company, I cannot avoid expressing my concern at the future prospect of their affairs, after the obtainment of such honourable and advantageous conditions. Do but reflect, Sir, that most of the gentlemen in power are become bankrupts by the unfortunate loss of Calcutta. This consideration, I must confess, added to their apprehensions of being dismissed the service, has often induced me to wish the gentlemen of Madras had taken the entire

management of affairs into their hands, till the Company's pleasure was known.

"It cannot be expected that the princes of this country, whose fidelity is always to be suspected, will remain firm to their promises and engagements from principle only. It is, therefore, become absolutely necessary to keep up a respectable force in this province for the future. How far this is agreeable to the Company's circumstances, you, Sir, are the best judge. I shall only add, there never was such attention paid to the advice of military men at Calcutta as was consistent with the safety of the place when in danger—a total ignorance of which was the real cause of the loss of Fort William.

"Our design upon Chandernagore is uncertain. I cannot yet fathom the Nabob's sentiments; the French having in a manner refused a neutrality this day offered it. As the expedition has so far advanced, I have given it my opinion to proceed and invest the place; and, if it should happen, at last, that the Nabob is really against taking it, to accept the neutrality, and make merit of doing it at his request and in obedience to his order, by which means he will be convinced of our friendship and power at the same time.

"I shall conclude this letter with submitting my conduct to your opinion. It would have

required greater abilities than I am master of to reconcile and satisfy so many different interests. If I have erred, it has not been with design; whenever that can be made to appear, I shall very deservedly forfeit the good opinion and favour of the Court of Directors, to whom I owe every thing."

CHAP. IV.

THE attack of Chandernagore had been strongly recommended to Clive's attention (A.D. 1757) by the government of Madras; and it was evident that, while the French kept so strong a force at that settlement, the safety of Calcutta must be endangered whenever its garrison was weak, or the Nabob of Bengal chose to contract an intimate alliance with our European enemy. This danger was at the moment much increased by the success of Bussy. That leader, alike remarkable for his sagacity and courage, after rendering the greatest services to the Subadar of the Deckan, Salabut Jung, and obtaining in reward a large grant of territory, had become an object of such jealousy to the prince whom he had placed on the throne, that an effort was made to destroy him and his party.

Not only were all the chiefs of the Deckan summoned to aid their prince in effecting this object, but the Mahrattas, also, were called in. The French general took possession of a palace called the Chahar-Mahal, within the city of Hyderabad, where he sustained a memorable

siege against this combined force; and on being reinforced by a party from Pondicherry, commanded by M. Law, he ultimately triumphed over his numerous assailants, and Salabut Jung was obliged to confirm all the grants he had before made to him. These included the fruitful provinces of Masulipatam, Vizagapatam, and Ganjam, which he was now engaged in settling; and his comparative vicinity gave credit to the daily reports that he was on his march to Bengal with a force, the numbers of which had been greatly exaggerated.

Whatever might be Bussy's intention, it was sufficiently obvious that he possessed the power of forming a junction * with the French force on the Ganges; and it was equally obvious, that such a junction would be ruinous to the English interests.

These considerations recommended the immediate attack of Chandernagore; but many and serious objections presented themselves to that measure. These were the strength of the French, the weakness of the English force, and the fear of producing a rupture with the Nabob, who was known to be most adverse to such an attack.

Clive, alluding to the expressed sentiments of

* The distance of the northern part of the country ceded to Bussy was not two hundred miles from Calcutta, through Cuttack.

Suraj-u-Dowlah on this subject observes, in the postscript of a letter (under date of the 1st of March, 1757) to Mr. Watts, the resident at the Nabob's court: —

"The admiral and myself are determined not to be guilty of a breach of faith in attacking Chandernagore, contrary to the expressed order of the Nabob."

But at the same time that he communicated this resolution, Mr. Watts was instructed to make every effort to obtain the consent of Suraj-u-Dowlah to the prosecution of this measure.

The necessity of this operation appeared more urgent from intelligence obtained, that the Nabob was carrying on secret intrigues with the French, and from the declaration of the latter, that, however willing to enter into an armistice in Bengal, they had no power to pledge themselves for its observance by the government of Pondicherry, or by those acting under its orders. The remembrance of Dupleix's disavowing the authority of La Bourdonnais to ransom Madras, and the position of Bussy, acting under an authority superior to that of the government of Chandernagore, made Admiral Watson very reluctant to sanction an engagement so liable to be broken, whenever it should suit the convenience of the enemy. Clive endeavoured for a period to overcome the Admiral's scruples,

from an impression that, should the Nabob join the French, the English force in Bengal was too weak to maintain a protracted contest; and so far from expecting aid from Madras, the superiority of the French on the coast of Coromandel urgently required his early return to that Presidency.

Intelligence of the occurrence of hostilities between France and England had been received; but the official declaration of war did not reach Admiral Watson till the first week of March. That officer, understanding that the Committee still continued apprehensive of the bad consequences likely to result from the attack of Chandernagore, wrote * to Clive as follows: —

"If the Nabob should not give his consent to our attacking the French, I will desist, provided the gentlemen of the Committee strongly represent to me that it will be more for the Company's interest that I should not undertake any thing against the French; for, as the declaration of war is an order to all officers under the King to distress the enemy as far as it is in their power, the Committee here should take it upon themselves the concluding a neutrality; but I will take upon me to give my word, that I will not commit any hostility against the French here,

* Admiral Watson's letter, dated March 6th, 1757.

unless the Governor-General and Superior Council of Pondicherry will not consent to a neutrality within the Ganges."

Admiral Watson had for some time carried on a correspondence with the Nabob, from which it appears that he was as anxious as Clive to convince Suraj-u-Dowlah it was for his interest and safety, as well as for that of the English, that Chandernagore should be attacked. "The ready obedience," he observes in one of these letters, "I paid to your desire, in not attacking the French, will, I persuade myself, convince you, that nothing but the strongest necessity could make me again apply to you on that subject. I beg you will give your most serious attention to what I am going to say. Immediately on the receipt of your past letters, I not only gave over thoughts of attacking the French, but invited them to enter into a treaty of neutrality, and to send people to settle the terms; but judge what must have been my surprise, when, after they were in some manner settled, the French deputies owned that they had no power to secure us the observance of the treaty, in case any commander of theirs should come with a greater power after my departure! You are too reasonable not to see, that it is impossible for me to conclude a treaty with people who have no power to do it; and

which, besides, while it ties my hands, leaves those of my enemies at liberty to do me what mischief they can. They have also a long time reported, that Monsieur Bussy is coming here with a great army. Is it to attack you? Is it to attack us? You are going to Patna. You ask our assistance. Can we, with the least degree of prudence, march with you, and leave our enemies behind us? You will then be too far off to support us, and we shall be unable to defend ourselves. Think what can be done in this situation. I see but one way. Let us take Chandernagore, and secure ourselves from any apprehensions from that quarter; and then we will assist you with every man in our power, and go with you, even to Delhi, if you will. Have we not sworn reciprocally, that the friends and enemies of the one should be regarded as such by the other? And will not God, the avenger of perjury, punish us, if we do not fulfil our oaths? What can I say more? Let me request the favour of your speedy answer."

Subsequent to the despatch of this letter, the accounts received from Moorshedabad completely satisfied the Admiral of the Nabob's insincerity. Suraj-u-Dowlah, while he delayed the execution of the engagements he had entered into with the English, intrigued with French agents, and detached a body of men to reinforce

the Governor of Hooghley, which it was fully believed was meant to aid the neighbouring garrison of Chandernagore.

This intelligence caused the Admiral to address him in a style calculated to put an end to all further evasions: — "I now acquaint you," were the concluding words of this letter *, "that the remainder of the troops which should have been here long ago (and which I hear the Colonel told you he expected), will be at Calcutta in a few days; that in a few days more I shall despatch a vessel for more ships and more troops; and that I will kindle such a flame in your country, as all the water in the Ganges shall not be able to extinguish. Farewell! remember that he who promises you this never yet broke his word with you or with any man whatsoever."

Suraj-u-Dowlah appears to have been alarmed at this communication; to which he replied in two notes, one dated the 9th, the other the 10th, of March. In the first, he endeavours to excuse himself for his want of punctuality in fulfilling his engagements with the English. In the second, he gives, though in general terms, that permission which had been so long desired, to attack Chandernagore. "You have understanding and generosity," he observes: "if your

* 7th March, 1757.

enemy, with an upright heart, claims your protection, you will give him his life; but then you must be well satisfied of the innocence of his intentions; if not, whatsoever you think right, that do."

Mr. Watts, Resident with the Nabob, had communicated to the Committee the fullest evidence of that prince's intrigues with the French; and, in his letter to Clive of the 1st of March, he asserts that he had advanced them one lac of rupees; and gives his opinion that the capture of Chandernagore is quite indispensable for the security of the English.

Mr. Watts's letter to the Committee closed (as appears by a letter from Mr. Drake to Clive) in the following words: "If you have not concluded with our enemies, I am persuaded you may attack without being under any apprehensions from the Nabob." In another letter to Clive, of the 10th of March, the Resident observes, "This serves to enclose a copy of my letter to the Committee, by which you will observe the Nabob has given his verbal consent for attacking Chandernagore."

In a letter of the 11th of the same month, Mr. Watts states, that the Nabob desired him to inform Colonel Clive that if he attacked the French he would not intermeddle.

The receipt of these letters, and the arrival of

reinforcements from Bombay, led to the attack of Chandernagore being ultimately determined upon. The negotiation for an armistice, which was far advanced, was broken off. The letters subsequently written by the Nabob *, retracting his assent to this measure, were deemed an indignity; and the very ground which he urged, the expected advance through Cuttack of Bussy, was considered an additional reason for hastening the siege.

Clive commenced operations by land, and displayed his usual judgment: but the early fall of this settlement must be chiefly ascribed to the daring boldness and admirable skill and intrepidity of Admiral Watson, and to the valour of those under his command.

* Mr. Scrafton, in a letter to Mr. Watts, dated the 20th of March, 1757, written by desire of Colonel Clive, observes, "The ten[a] letters received from the Nabob yesterday are sufficient evidences of his irresolution and variable disposition. Besides these letters, one Mutrumul, whom the Nabob mentions as a person in whom he has great confidence, has been here. The chief purpose of his embassy seems to be to act as a mediator, if peace is to be effected between the French and us; but, if not, it should appear the Nabob will trouble himself no more about it. At all events, things no longer remain upon the Nabob's determination. The ships and batteries will all begin to play at daybreak in the morning; and two days will, at the utmost, decide their fate."

[a] *Sic*: query, *two*?

Few naval achievements have excited more admiration; and even at the present day, when the river is so much better known, the success with which the largest vessels of this fleet were navigated to Chandernagore, and laid alongside the batteries of that settlement, is a subject of wonder. The Kent and Tiger, with the flags of Admirals Watson and Pocock on board, were the only vessels engaged.* They were so close, that the musketry from the tops and poop were most annoying to the enemy, who behaved with great gallantry, keeping up a heavy and destructive fire: nor did they offer to capitulate till their batteries were a heap of ruins, and all their guns dismounted.

Though the outworks of Chandernagore had been taken by Clive, no breach had been made on the land side; but, while the battery guns and mortars opened upon the town, the troops were pushed forward, and, from the tops of the houses adjacent to the wall, kept up a galling and destructive fire; which, as it increased the loss of the French, no doubt hastened their surrender.

We cannot give a better account of the imme-

* Owing to the anchor of the Kent not holding, she drifted from her appointed station to that fixed upon for the Salisbury, close to the south-east bastion; and the latter vessel was, consequently, thrown out of action.

diate causes which led to the attack of Chandernagore, than in the words of Clive in his report to the governor of Fort St. George.

"I acquainted you," he observes, "that the neutrality with the French was not likely to be concluded. I continued encamped on the same ground; and, on the 7th instant, received a letter from the Nabob, desiring me to join against the Affghans, the van of whose army was attempting an irruption into this province. Accordingly, I began my march the next morning; and, thinking it a convenient opportunity to prevail on him to suffer us to take Chandernagore, I wrote him word of our having endeavoured to conclude a neutrality with the French, but that the Director and Council were not vested with proper powers for that purpose; that, whilst we were engaged at a distance assisting him against his enemies, the French, joined by Monsieur Bussy, might make an attempt on Calcutta; and that therefore I should wait off Chandernagore, in hopes of receiving his leave to attack it. Accordingly, on the 12th I encamped at the back of it, within a mile of the fort; and on the 13th the Admiral received a letter from the Nabob, the purport of which was, that we might act as we pleased with respect to the French; and, having intelligence at the same time that the troops he had sent to their assistance were withdrawn,

I summoned the place to surrender that night; but, receiving no answer, the next morning I attacked their western battery, which they defended very briskly the whole day, but at night abandoned it. A detachment I sent about noon to the southward took post in a garden near the fort, and within some of their batteries. The loss they had sustained at the western battery, and the apprehension of their retreat being cut off by our detachment, made them likewise desert that night all their works to the southward; among the rest, a strong half-moon on the river side, mounting heavy metal, and a battery of three guns playing down the channel, both which must have annoyed our ships greatly in their passage up. The batteries to the northward were all quitted at the same time.

"On the 19th, the King's ships got to the Prussian gardens, about a mile from the fort; but it was the 23d before they attempted to pass the vessels which had been sunk by the enemy, opposite to the half-moon. They weighed at daybreak, and in less than an hour were abreast of the fort. A thirteen-inch mortar of ours, with several cohorns and royals, had played incessantly the whole night; and when the ships weighed, we opened two batteries very near the walls, one of four pieces of cannon, the other three, all twenty-four-pounders; and kept a continual dis-

charge of musketry from the adjacent houses. In short, the fire from the ships and the shore was so great, that they capitulated in three hours. A copy of the terms granted them is enclosed. You will observe the surrender is made to Admiral Watson; but common report will be just in publishing how great a share the land forces had in this conquest!" Clive, in his evidence before the House of Commons, states, "that Admiral Watson's fleet surmounted difficulties which he believes no other ships could have done, and that it was impossible for him to do the officers of the squadron justice on that occasion."

In a private letter* to Mr. Pigot, written upon the same occasion, Clive observes, "I make no doubt but the forces are impatiently expected at Madras. It is a very great blow that has detained them — no less than the attack and taking of Chandernagore; of more consequence to the Company, in my opinion, than the taking of Pondicherry itself. It was a most magnificent and rich colony; the garrison consisted of more than five hundred Europeans and seven hundred blacks, all carrying arms; three hundred and sixty are prisoners, and near one hundred have been suffered to give their parole,

* 29th March, 1757.

consisting of civil, military, and inhabitants. Nearly sixty white ladies are rendered miserable by the loss of this place. However, nothing has been wanting, either on the Admiral's part or mine, to render their condition supportable: their clothes, their linen, and every thing have been suffered to go out.

"I must refer you to the Committee's letter for many particulars. I fear I shall not be able to send a list of military and artillery stores by this conveyance, which are very great, and will abundantly supply Calcutta. By the Nabob's letters, you will find of what a wavering and pusillanimous disposition he is. However, I am in hopes this last stroke will fix him. He has already performed almost every article of the treaty; paid Mr. Watts the three lacs of rupees; delivered up Cossimbazar, and all the other factories, with the money and goods therein taken. The gentlemen write from thence, that little or nothing is wanting.

"Our stay till August, which is now become unavoidable, will, I hope, settle every thing here in the most advantageous manner for the Company, and perhaps will induce the Nabob to give up all the French factories. This will be driving them out root and branch. I am well informed, without Chandernagore, the Islands must starve, and Pondicherry suffer greatly. My inclinations

always tend towards the coast; and I hope to be with you, with a very considerable force, in September. The lateness of the season makes the passage now very uncertain; and the length of it would certainly cause the loss of a great part of our forces.

"It was with great reluctance Mr. Watson consented I should sign the articles of capitulation, though drawn out in his name, notwithstanding it was impossible the fort could ever have been taken without our assistance.

"We attacked the enemy six or seven days before the ships, and drove them from eleven batteries, one of them by the river side, of very heavy metal, under which were sunk four or five ships and vessels to prevent the passage of the squadron, which could never have been effected without mastering that battery. We erected one of five* twenty-four-pounders within a hundred yards of the south-east bastion, and another of three twenty-four-pounders within a hundred and fifty yards of the north-east bastion; besides which, we manned all the tops of the houses, and kept up such a fire of musketry, that the enemy could not appear either on the ramparts or bastions, by which means the fire was insignificant to what it would have been."

* Called a four-gun battery in Clive's report to the Governor of Fort St. George, p. 194.

From this letter, and from one he wrote to Mr. Mabbot, the Chairman of the Directors, there can be no doubt that Clive's intention was to return to the coast as early as he could, and that he expected every thing would be settled by September, when the season would be favourable for that voyage; but the jealousy and alarm of the Nabob at the rising power of the English were greatly increased by the fall of Chandernagore; and his character and past actions gave no security against his intrigues and hostility, unless overawed by the presence of a superior force, and the establishment of a commanding influence at his court. The President of the Committee at Calcutta was unequal to the duties now performed by Clive; nor was there one officer in Bengal upon whom these could devolve with the slightest hope of preserving, much less of improving, the advantages that had been obtained.

Placed in such circumstances, Clive, though he had received repeated orders to repair to Fort St. George, was not therefore exempted from the duty of exercising his judgment as to the course which it was best for the general interests of the Company that he should pursue; and he had to balance against that obedience which he owed, and was anxious to pay to his superiors, the imminent danger which his departure from Bengal would produce. The attack of Chandernagore

had been indispensable to give security to the English against an European enemy: but the very success which had attended their arms upon this and other occasions was likely, with a prince of Suraj-u-Dowlah's character, to involve them in a further and more extensive scene of hostilities.

This Clive foresaw before that operation commenced; and, writing to the Committee at Calcutta upon this subject, he observed, "If you attack Chandernagore, you cannot stop there; you must go further. Having established yourself by force, and not by the consent of the Nabob, he by force will endeavour to drive you out again." In a private letter to Mr. Pigot, written a month after the fall of the French settlement*, he gives a vivid description of the Nabob's character, and of the motives and feelings which he supposes to agitate his weak and vacillating mind, at a period critical both for himself and for the Company's establishments in Bengal.

"The most of the articles of the peace," he observes, "are complied with; yet, from the tyranny, cowardice, and suspicion of the Nabob, no dependence can be had upon him. No consideration could induce him to deliver up the French: it is true he has ordered them out of his dominions, and they are at some distance from his

* 30th April, 1757.

capital; but he has retained them secretly in his pay, and has certainly written to Monsieur Deleyrit and Bussy, to send men to his assistance. One day he tears my letters, and turns out our vakeel, and orders his army to march; he next countermands it, sends for the vakeel, and begs his pardon for what he has done. Twice a week he threatens to impale Mr. Watts: in short, he is a compound of every thing that is bad, keeps company with none but his menial servants, and is universally hated and despised by the great men. This induces me to acquaint you there is a conspiracy going on against him by several of the great men, at the head of whom is Jugget Seit himself, as also Cojah Wazeed. I have been applied to for assistance, and every advantage promised the Company can wish. The Committee are of opinion it should be given as soon as the Nabob is secured. For my own part, I am persuaded, there can be neither peace nor security while such a monster reigns."

"Mr. Watts and Omichund* are at Moorshedabad, and have many meetings with the great men. The last letter I received from Mr. Watts, he desires that our proposals may be sent, and that they only wait for them to put every thing in execution; so that you may very shortly ex-

* Omichund was a native agent employed by Mr. Watts. A full account of this person will be given hereafter.

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pect to hear of a revolution which will put an end to all French expectations of ever settling in this country again. The Patans, who were coming this way, have been pacified by a sum of money, and are returning to their own country. Had they approached near, every thing would have been overset in this country, from three fourths of the Nabob's army being against him. It is a most disagreeable circumstance, to find that the troubles are likely to commence again: but the opinion here is universal, that there can be neither peace nor trade without a change of government."

When Chandernagore was taken, Clive's next object was to root out the French from this quarter of India. This appears from all his letters, public and private. It was, as he repeatedly states, his confirmed opinion, that the English and their European rivals could not have coexistence, as political powers, in India; and both had gone too far to be able to recede. The superiority was, therefore, to be decided by the sword; and on this ground, he deemed it to be his duty to follow up the success which had attended the British arms, by the pursuit and capture of such of the European enemy as yet remained in Bengal.

The corps under the command of M. Law, when joined by the deserters and French officers,

and men who had broken their parole, or escaped from Chandernagore, amounted to only a hundred Europeans and sixty sepoys; but they were, notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, protected by the Nabob, who evidently looked to them as auxiliaries in a war which he anticipated with the English.

The hopes with which the French continued to feed him, and in which they themselves probably indulged, of receiving reinforcements from Bussy through Cuttack, were not of a nature to be treated with neglect. The great plan formed by Dupleix, and executed by Bussy, of establishing a paramount power and influence in the Deckan, had, to a great degree, succeeded; and though commercial considerations had, during the short interval of peace in Europe, led to an opposite policy, which condemned the whole system pursued by the French governor as one of irrational ambition, and irreconcileable with the interests of the French company, the moment war with England occurred, prudential resolutions were forgotten, and every preparation was made to establish the French supremacy in India. Godeheu, who succeeded Dupleix, and who, at first, appeared only anxious to abandon all his predecessor had gained, now sought to preserve and improve every advantage which yet remained, as the result of former measures. Bussy was pro-

mised early support, and directed to maintain the possessions ceded to France, which extended six hundred miles along the coast of Coromandel, and Orissa, from Moodappely south, to the pagoda of Juggernaut, north.

Under such circumstances, nothing appeared more likely, than that this able and enterprising officer should have reinforced his countrymen in Bengal: and the probable consequences of a party of any strength co-operating with the Nabob, were of a character that justified all the jealousy and alarm which Admiral Watson and Clive entertained upon this subject; and quite authorised them in those decided measures they adopted for the permanent security of the British factories and territories in Bengal and Bahar. To have stopped short — much more to have left the country — before this important object was accomplished, would have been to cast away the fruits of their success, and to have uselessly wasted all the blood and treasure that had been already expended in this memorable expedition.

That these were the sentiments of Clive at this period, is proved by the purport of all his letters, public and private; and these afford strong evidence that he by no means contemplated success as certain. In a letter (dated the 11th of March) to Mr. Orme, who was his agent at Madras, he requests him to remit his money to Calcutta, to

be sent to England, as "the times were dangerous." Such facts are important, as they prove, that the measures he found himself compelled at this period to adopt originated in a sense of duty, and not in that spirit of ambition, and desire of wealth and personal aggrandizement, which have been stated by some as the chief, if not sole, motives of his conduct at this remarkable epoch of his life.

I have already spoken of the designs of the French, and the means they had of carrying them into execution. I shall now examine how far they were likely to be aided by Suraj-u-Dowlah.

Aliverdi Khan, the grand-uncle and predecessor of the reigning Nabob, had protected those European factories which he found established under the authority of firmans, or mandates, from the emperors of Delhi. He gained an increase of revenue by the duties on that commerce which the enterprise of these foreign merchants encouraged; and he taxed the wealth they accumulated, by making them give to him or his officers occasional presents, and by compelling them to contribute their portion of the sums he had so frequently to pay the Mahrattas, to purchase either exemption from attack, or the retreat of their predatory bands from Bengal. The sums thus levied were, during Aliverdi's government, not immoderate; and the policy of that able

prince made him so vary the time of his demands, that they came at distinct periods, and under different pretexts, upon the different factories: for though, no doubt, fearful of the union of the Europeans settled in his country, he was sufficiently acquainted with their national jealousies to know, that nothing but a dread of ruin, operating at the same moment upon them all, could lead them to combine in any effort to oppose his demands.

His grand-nephew, Suraj-u-Dowlah, was of a very different character from Aliverdi Khan. The latter, trained amid the vicissitudes of fortune, showed, in every measure he adopted, that he merited the throne which he had usurped. His successor, cradled in prosperity, came into power without an effort, and evinced, in every action, a weak and feeble mind, that had no objects but those of self-gratification, which he sought by means that were usually as cruel and unjust, as they were arbitrary and violent. This prince early showed that he owned no check upon such dispositions but that of personal fear: his cowardice fully equalled his presumption, and both were excessive. In looking round for objects of plunder after he ascended the musnud, or throne, the English settlements at Cossimbazar and Calcutta attracted his peculiar attention, on account of the reputed wealth, not only of the Europeans, but of the natives who had settled

under their protection. The injuries and cruelties he had, in the prosecution of this object, inflicted upon the nation and upon the individuals whom he had wantonly attacked, were of a nature which a mind like his could not believe would ever be forgotten or forgiven. The disgrace he had sustained, in being obliged to fly before the British arms, and to purchase peace by concessions and a partial restitution of plunder, rankled in his breast; and, alarmed at a power he had hitherto contemned, he sought the alliance of the French, whose co-operation he now regretted he had not earlier obtained.

The government of Chandernagore had so far conciliated him, that they refused to join the English in their efforts to compel him to make reparation for his injustice and oppression; though the armistice which they desired was offered them as the reward of their adopting a cause which, had commercial considerations alone regulated their proceedings, was obviously that of every European settled in Bengal. But Suraj-u-Dowlah well knew that other feelings actuated both the English and French, and that each desired the total expulsion of the other from his territories. Acting upon this knowledge, and with that deep exasperation which belongs to the wounded pride of a despot, he secretly courted the French, to avenge himself on those by whom

he had been defeated and humbled. He at first sent aid to Chandernagore. His subsequent assent, imperfect as it was, to the attack of that place, was only extorted by the fear of the moment; and it was retracted almost as soon as given. He still cherished hopes that the French garrison might repel their enemies; but their early surrender, and the whole character of the attack, particularly the tremendous fire of the men-of-war, filled his mind with a mixture of dread, and irreconcileable jealousy and hatred, towards a nation who, in a few months after he had exulted in his triumph over their defenceless factory, had established themselves in his country, in a position which already caused the native princes and chiefs to view them as the future arbiters of India.

The British commanders were, no doubt, at this period prepared to consent to any settlement, which gave them indemnity for the past, and security for the future, rather than incur the hazards of war, at a moment when they could, in case of reverse, expect no succour: for the very force by which it must be carried on was urgently required on the coast of Coromandel. But the mind of Suraj-u-Dowlah was quite incapable of comprehending the nature and force of such grounds of action. He probably thought they would act as he would have done if success had favoured his arms: perhaps he still rested on

his own strength, and the hopes held out by the French. Whatever were his motives, so far from showing a disposition to pursue a course which might lead the British authorities to confide in him, he hurried on to the adoption of every measure that could produce a contrary impression; and, in a very short period subsequent to the fall of Chandernagore, it became quite obvious, that his continuing Nabob of Bengal was irreconcileable with every prospect of peace to the English settled in that country; and that the departure of the fleet, and a very considerable proportion of the troops, for Madras, would be the certain signal for renewed hostilities. But the immediate causes of the war, which terminated in the dethronement and death of this ill-fated prince, must now be stated.

The sentiments Clive had formed of the Nabob's character and policy have been fully given in his letter* to Mr. Pigot, already quoted. The proofs that his conclusions were just are to be found in various documents, but particularly in the letters from Mr. Watts†, and in the communications made by the Nabob to the French officers Bussy and Law, some of which were intercepted at the time, and others found after the battle of Plassey.

* Vide p. 199.

† Mr. Watts continued through this period Resident at the Nabob's court at Moorshedabad.

Before Chandernagore was taken, accounts of the Nabob's overtures to Bussy had been sent by Mr. Watts, the correctness of whose statements was corroborated at that period from other quarters, and their truth subsequently confirmed, by the copies of the letters being found at Moorshedabad.

In a letter to Bussy, about the end of February, the Nabob observes* : "These disturbers of my country, the Admiral and Colonel Clive (Sabut Jung†), whom bad fortune attend! without any reason whatever, are warring against Zubat ul Toojar‡ (M. Renault), the governor of Chandernagore. This you will learn from his letter. I, who in all things seek the good of mankind, assist him in every respect, and have sent him the best of my troops, that he may join with them, and fight the English; and if it become necessary, I will join him myself. I hope in God these English, who are unfortunate, will be punished for the disturbances they have raised. Be confident; look on my forces as your own. I have wrote you before for two thousand soldiers and musqueteers under the command of two trusty

* Reports of House of Commons, vol. iii. p. 221.

† Sabut Jung (which signifies "daring in war") is the title by which Clive is to this day known among the natives of India.

‡ Zubat-ul-Toojar, the title of the French chief, means "the essence or excellence of merchants."

chiefs. I persuade myself you have already sent them, as I desired; should you not, I desire you will do me the pleasure to send them immediately. Further particulars you will learn from M. Renault. Oblige me with frequent news of your health."

In another letter, written in the end of March, the Nabob adds: "I am advised that you have arrived at Echapore. This news gives me pleasure: the sooner you come here, the greater satisfaction I shall have in meeting you. What can I write of the perfidy of the English? They have, without ground, picked a quarrel with M. Renault, and taken by force his factory. They want now to quarrel with M. Law, your chief at Cossimbazar; but I will take care to oppose and overthrow all their proceedings. When you come to Ballasore, I will then send M. Law to your assistance, unless you forbid his setting out. Rest assured of my good will towards you and your Company; and to convince you of my sincerity, I now send purwannahs (orders) to Deedar Ali, and Ramajee Pundit, and to Rajaram Singh, that, as soon as you may enter the province, they may meet and lend you all possible assistance, and not, on any pretence, impede your march, both at Cuttack, Ballasore, and Midnapore."

Copies of these letters had been seen at the time of dispatch by Cojah Wazeed, who had com-

municated their contents to Mr. Watts; and this intelligence was corroborated by the fact that servants of the Nabob, in charge of an elephant and jewels for M. Bussy, had passed Ballasore; and by the protection given to M. Law, who, notwithstanding his professions to the contrary, was retained in the service of Suraj-u-Dowlah.

That prince at first seemed not to oppose the surrender of this small party of the French to the English; he afterwards pretended to banish them from his dominions, and they marched from Moorshedabad for Patna, but in consequence of a note* from the Nabob, M. Law remained at Rajhmahal, the manager of which district had been directed to supply him with money, and to aid him, in every way he could, until Bussy's approach.

The Nabob by these acts, by his positive refusal to allow the English to proceed up the river, by his non-performance of some of the articles of the treaty, and by his advancing a part of his army to Plassey, had placed himself in a position hostile to the Company: but he artfully desired to throw the odium of renewed hostilities upon

* The following is the translation of the note from Suraj-u-Dowlah to M. Law: "I send you ten thousand rupees for expenses. Remain quiet at Rajhmahal. When M. Bahadre, &c. come on this side Cuttack, I will then send for you." Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 221.

the English. He complained of the continuance in the field of the troops under Clive, and of the fleet's lying off Chandernagore. If the British commanders would return to Calcutta, or leave the river, he would, he said, withdraw his advanced corps from Plassey, and remain on friendly terms, as he would then be convinced that the object of the English was commerce, not war! This was the purport of several communications; but every day brought proof of their insincerity, and shewed that the Nabob's sole object was to lull them into a fatal security, till, from the departure of their force and the arrival of his French allies, he could accomplish his design of extirpating them from his dominions.

An intercepted letter * from M. Law to the chief of one of the lesser French factories, afforded, of itself, proof of this fact, had any been wanting: but the indiscretion of the Nabob was

* The following is a copy of this letter: "Je viens de recevoir une lettre du Nabob, par laquelle il m'ordonne de retourner à Muxadabad. Il vient, dit-il, se joindre à nous, pour tomber sur les Anglais. J'ai reçu aussi une lettre du Sieur Çhangeau, qui me donne d'assez bonnes nouvelles. Je suis surpris, que vous ne m'avez pas écrit; car je ne puis croire que vous soyez tout-à-fait ignorant de ce que se passe. J'envois M. de Sinfray au Nabob, avec lequel il est chargé d'entrer en négociation. Il a ordre de rester à notre loge. Comme il est votre ancien, vous aurez la bonté de le reconnoître pour chef, et de lui obéir en cette qualité. Peut-être irai-je bientôt vous trouver."

too great to allow him to conceal his designs; and a number of the chief nobles and ministers of his government, who had long been discontented with his rule, perceiving what must early happen, sought the alliance of the English, concluding that they must desire the dethronement of a prince whose continuance in power was incompatible with their existence.

One of the chief causes that had hitherto kept the Nabob in check, was the dread of the Affghân conquerors of Delhi: but news had arrived of their prince Ahmed Abdalla having returned to his own country, and its effects were soon visible in the threatening language and conduct of Suraj-u-Dowlah towards the resident, who now earnestly recommended Clive to lose no time in decidedly attaching himself to the party already formed against the Nabob. In one letter* Mr. Watts observes, "Jugget Seit, Runjutroy, Omichund, and others, in short all degrees of persons, are persuaded he (the Nabob) will break his agreement, and attack us whenever he is disengaged, or our forces weakened by your leaving us and the departure of the men-of-war, or whenever he can be assisted by the French."

The resident commences a letter, written two days after the one quoted, with the following

* 26th April, 1757.

strong expression: "The Nabob will not keep his agreement. This you may depend upon." He mentions that Suraj-u-Dowlah himself publicly speaks in this tone; but adds that three fourths of his army were his enemies.

The most serious of all the dangers with which the English were threatened at this period, was the expected arrival of Bussy, of whose real movements they had no correct intelligence. We find a letter, under date the 14th of May, A. D. 1757, from Mr. Drake, Governor of Calcutta, to Colonel Clive, which states: "The report that has so long been rumoured of M. Bussy's march into this province is now verified, by advice from the Ballasore factory of the 10th instant, certifying that M. Bussy was advanced five days on this side Cuttack, with seven hundred Europeans and five thousand sepoys."

This was the very circumstance, the probability of the occurrence of which had constituted the chief ground on which the Admiral and Clive had urged the Nabob to give them substantial proof of his friendly disposition, by abandoning wholly all connection with their enemies. Admiral Watson, in his correspondence with him, had insisted strongly upon this point. Alluding to the Nabob's frequent evasions upon this and other subjects, the Admiral writes in his letter* of the

* Ive's Voyage, p. 143.

19th of April, "I observe in your letter the following particulars, viz. That for my satisfaction, and according to our mutual agreement to look upon each other's enemies as our own, you have expelled M. Law and his adherents from your dominions, and given strict orders, &c. &c. My brother, Mr. Watts, who is entrusted with all the Company's concerns, always writes me the particulars of your intended favours towards us; but I have never found that what he writes is put into execution; neither do I find that what you wrote me in your letter, dated the 1st of Rajub (22d of March), is yet complied with. You therein assured me that you would fulfil all the articles you had agreed to, by the 15th of that moon. Have you ever yet complied with them all? No.—How then can I place any confidence in what you write, when your actions are not correspondent with your promises? Or how can I reconcile your telling me in so sacred a manner you will be my ally, and assist me with your forces against the French, when you have given a purwannah to M. Law and his people to go towards Patna, in order to escape me, and tell me it is for my satisfaction, and in observance of the mutual agreement, you have taken this measure? Is this an act of friendship? Or is it in this manner I am to understand you will assist me? Or am I to draw a conclusion from what you write? or

what you do? You are too wise not to know, when a man tells you one thing, and does the direct contrary, which you ought to believe. Why then do you endeavour to persuade me you will be my friend, when at the same time you give my enemies your protection, furnish them with ammunition, and suffer them to go out of your dominions with three pieces of cannon? Their effects I esteem a trifling circumstance, and as far as they will contribute to do justice to your people who are creditors to the French Company, I have no objection to your seizing them for their use; for money is what I despise, and accumulating riches to myself is what I did not come out for. But I have already told you, and now repeat it again, that while a Frenchman remains in this kingdom, I will never cease pursuing him: but if they deliver themselves up, they shall find me merciful, and I am confident those who have already fallen into my hands will do me the justice to say, that they have been treated with a much greater generosity than is usual by the general custom of war."

Clive, in several letters to Mr. Watts, written immediately after the fall of Chandernagore, urges the surrender or expulsion of the French, as an indispensable condition of the Nabob's continued friendship with the English. Every artifice was used by Suraj-u-Dowlah to evade compliance

with this urgent and repeated demand. He first pleaded the debts due by the French to his subjects: — he was told, that the property of their Company could be made responsible for such debts. He next stated the loss of revenue to the Emperor, from duties paid on their trade:—this duty*, he was told, had been estimated at 60,000 rupees, and would henceforward be paid by the English. Driven by these propositions from every ground of evasion, and not yet willing to declare openly his real intentions, the Nabob publicly directed the march of M. Law towards the dominions of the vizier of Oude, but with no design, as has been before shown, that the French should leave his territories.

During the siege of Chandernagore, Roydullub, the principal minister of Suraj-u-Dowlah, had been sent, with a considerable body of men, to occupy an entrenched camp at Plassey. This armed force, which was meant to awe the English into attention to the Nabob's wishes, was not only continued after the French settlement was taken, but was reinforced by a party under the Bukhshee† (or commander of the army), Jaffier Ali

* The particulars of this offer are in a letter from Mr. Walsh to Mr. Watts of the 11th April, 1757, written by order of Colonel Clive.

† Bukhshee, literally means "Paymaster;" but that office is, in native armies, almost invariably associated with the station of commander-in-chief.

Khan, and the future intentions of the Nabob were almost publicly proclaimed, when his officers not only prevented the passage of a few sepoys up the river to Cossimbazar, but stopped the supplies of ammunition and stores necessary to restore that factory to its former state.

These orders, Mr. Watts wrote Clive, the Nabob's officers were commanded to enforce, by cutting the noses and ears of every one that attempted to pass the stations where they were posted.

Such a state of affairs could not continue long. The important events of which they were the prelude will occupy the next chapter; but before we enter upon the narrative of them, it will be useful to take a concise view of the nature and construction of the power of Suraj-u-Dowlah, as well as the reputation and influence of his principal leaders and officers: for without such knowledge it is quite impossible to understand, much less to judge, the conduct of Clive in those wide scenes of intrigue, war, and negotiation, into which he was at this period compelled to enter, or else to abandon his half-executed enterprise.

CHAP. V.

THE power established by the Mahommedans in India has never varied in its character from their first invasion of that country to the present time. The different qualities of the individuals by whom it has been exercised, have introduced a variety of shades both in the mode and substance of their rule, but the general features have remained the same. The Mahommedan emperors of Delhi, the Subadars of divisions of the empire, and the Nabobs and chiefs of kingdoms and principalities, supplanted and expelled, or extirpated, sovereigns and princes of the Hindu military tribe: — but while they succeeded to the power which these potentates had held, the management of the finance and revenue, and all those minuter arrangements of internal policy, on which the good order of the machine of government must ever depend, remained very nearly in the same hands in which the Mahommedans had found them. The unwarlike but well-educated Hindus of the Brahmin or the mercantile castes continued, as under the martial princes of their own tribe, to manage almost all the concerns of the state. A Hindu, under the denomination of minister, or as Naib

(or deputy), continued at the head of the exchequer; and in this office he was connected with the richest bankers and monied Hindus of the country. Princes had private hoards,—but there was no public treasury. Advances were made to individuals and bodies of men by bankers (denominated Seits or Soucars), who were repaid by orders on the revenue, and obtained a double profit on the disbursement and the receipt of money. The proud and thoughtless Mahommedan prince, anxious only for the means necessary for his purposes of pleasure or ambition, was not over-scrupulous as to the terms he granted to the financial agents: and the advantages they gained, combined with their simple and frugal habits*, enabled them to amass immense wealth. This they well knew how to employ, for purposes both of accumulation, and of establishing political influence; commanding, as they did, the money resources of the country, the prince, his officers, and army, were all in a great degree dependent upon them; and to treat them with extreme severity was certain to incur obloquy, and often defeated its aim, since, by their natural character,

* This observation alludes to their general habits. On religious festivals, and on their own marriages, and those of their children, the most parsimonious Hindu often spends great sums.

they were as patient of suffering as they were tenacious of their gains.

Besides, the wealth of Hindu ministers and managers was usually deposited with bankers; and the injury done to credit by acts of injustice or oppression towards any of the latter class, affected such numbers, as to prove ruinous to the reputation, and often to the interests, of the despot by whom it was attempted.

The Hindu ministers, or revenue officers, had not the same number of retainers as the Mahommedan. They were, therefore, seldom in the same degree objects of jealousy or dread: but though they were from this cause less exposed to extreme violence, they were more frequently objects of extortion; and for this they were better prepared, both from the great profits they made, and from their parsimonious habits.

A very quick and intelligent Mahommedan prince*, on being asked why he gave so decided a preference to Hindu managers and renters over those of his own religion, replied, "that a Mahommedan was like a sieve, — much of what was poured in went through; while a Hindu was like a sponge, which retained all, but on pressure gave back, as required, what it had absorbed!"

* Ameer-ul-Omra, the second son, and for some period minister, of Mahommed Ali, the former Nabob of the Carnatic.

But there were other reasons which prompted Mahommedan princes to employ and encourage Hindus, both at their court and in their armies. They formed a counterbalance to the ambition and turbulence of their relatives, and of the chiefs and followers of their own race. This feeling operated from the emperors on the throne of Delhi, when in the very plenitude of their power, down to the lowest chief: and it is from its action combined with that influence which the wealth and qualities of the Hindus obtained, that we are, in a great measure, to account for the easy establishment and long continuance of the Mahommedan power in India. The new dominion was attended with little of change, except to the Hindu sovereign and his favourites. The lesser Rajas (or princes) gave their allegiance and paid tribute to a Mahommedan instead of a Hindu superior, while their condition and local power continued nearly the same.

Hindu ministers and officers served probably to greater profit the idle and dissipated Moghul, than they could have done a master of their own tribe; and as there was complete religious toleration, and their ancient and revered usages were seldom or never outraged, they were too divided a people upon other subjects to unite in any effort to expel conquerors, who, under the influence

of various motives, left to them almost all, except the name, of power.

From the composition and character of such governments, it is obvious that neither individuals nor the community can recognise, much less feel an attachment to what we call the state, as separated from the persons who, for the time being, preside over the different branches of its administration. The sovereign has his servants and adherents; his tributaries, chiefs, commanders, and officers have theirs; but the latter owe no fidelity or allegiance, except to their immediate superiors. Each individual of this body has personal privileges, and enjoys protection in certain rights, from established usages, which, affecting all of the class to which he belongs, cannot be violated with impunity: but as there is no regular constitution of government supported by fixed succession to the throne, men derive no benefit from the state, and owe it therefore no duty. From these facts it is evident that nothing can be so erroneous as to judge the conduct of the natives of India, amid the changes and revolutions to which the governments of that country are continually exposed, by those rules which apply to nations which enjoy civil liberty and equal laws. Treachery and ingratitude to their chief or patron are with them the basest of crimes: and obedience and attachment to those who sup-

port them, the highest of virtues. According as they fail in, or fulfil, the obligations which the relations of the society in which they live impose, men are deemed infamous or praise-worthy: and to the reciprocal ties by which such bands are held together, the prince and chief are as often indebted for their safety, as their followers for the just reward of their devoted service. The monarch is secure upon his throne no longer than while he can preserve a body of personal adherents. The chief that is threatened by his sovereign looks to his followers for support or revenge; while the latter, in the lesser vicissitudes to which they are subject, expect with equal confidence the protection of him to whom they give their allegiance.

In countries where men are influenced by such motives, the dethronement of a prince is regarded as no more than the fall of a successful leader or chief of a party; and the frequency of such an occurrence has perhaps tended, more than all other causes, to temper the exercise of despotic power, and to compel sovereigns who owned no other check to seek its continuance, by reconciling to their rule those by whom it was so liable to be subverted.

The construction of the government of Suraj-u-Dowlah was like that of other Mahommedan states: but the elements of which it was com-

posed wanted the controlling spirit of a superior like Aliverdi Khan.

Among the chiefs of the army there were several who early took alarm at the excesses of their young prince, and who, confiding more in their own influence and strength than in his justice or consideration, assumed an attitude of very doubtful allegiance.

The greater number of these leaders enjoyed jaghiers, or estates, on the produce of which they maintained a band of followers. The principal person of this class was the Bukhshee, or commander, of the army, Meer Jaffier, a soldier of fortune, who had raised himself so high in the estimation of Aliverdi Khan, that he had not only promoted him to the highest military rank, but had given him his daughter in marriage.

The country of Bengal has ever been famous for the wealth and talent of the higher classes of its Hindu inhabitants; and we find, throughout its history, that these have filled the chief offices of the state. This was the case at the period of which we are treating. The managers and renters — of whom Ramnarrain the governor of the province of Patna, and Raja Ram the manager of Midnapore, were the principal — were almost all Hindus. Nor were the station and influence of this tribe less in the army and at court. Monick Chund, who had been governor of Calcutta, held

a high military rank, and Roydullub, the dewan, or minister of finance, had great influence, which was increased by his being intimately associated with Jugget Seit, the representative of the richest soucar, or banking firm, in India; and who, through means of his riches and extensive connections, possessed equal influence at Lucknow* and Delhi as at Moorshedabad.

The above were the leading persons of the state, each of whom had numerous adherents who looked to them, not to the prince, for support and advancement. It is a very remarkable fact, and one that singularly illustrates the character of Suraj-u-Dowlah, that he appears to have been the only person for whom no one felt attachment, and in whom no one had confidence. The Nabob, like princes of similar character, had unworthy favourites, among whom a Hindu, named Mohun Lal, held a distinguished place, and without filling any high office, had at one period more power than any person in this weak and divided government.

Considerations of mutual security had for some time led Roydullub and Meer Jaffier to a secret understanding, and pledges of friendship had passed between them; but this connection appears to have been, at first, formed more for their

* Lucknow is the capital of the vizier of Oude.

personal security than with any purpose hostile to the Nabob; for it was not until a chief called Khuda Yar Khan Lattee, who aimed at the musnud, had made proposals to Mr. Watts, which were supported by Jugget Seit, that Meer Jaffier came forward with an offer to act in concert with the English for the dethronement of a prince, the continuance of whose reign, all seemed to agree, must prove destructive to the country.

We cannot have a more convincing proof of the mixed contempt and dread with which his own subjects regarded Suraj-u-Dowlah, than is afforded by the transactions of Moorshedabad at this period. Even the professional caution of Jugget Seit was roused into bold action, and his name was added to the list of those who invited the English to a confederacy, which soon spread too wide for concealment; and which, combining men of all classes and all interests, could only obtain success by the existence of a general sentiment of distrust and detestation of the ruler, against whom it was directed.*

* It is believed to have been principally at the suggestion of the great banker Jugget Seit, that the English were applied to as the instruments of this revolution. One great reason assigned, was the good faith they had always shown in their commercial transactions, from which a favourable judgment was formed of their general character. M. Law, than whom there could be no better authority, and who many years after was Governor of Pondicherry, always gave

Notwithstanding appearances and professions, it was with the greatest hesitation that the Committee of Calcutta ventured on the scene * that now opened to them; and certainly nothing could have justified the course of proceeding that was adopted, but a conviction that a change in the reigning prince was indispensable to the existence of the English in Bengal, com-

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it as his opinion, that the English were obliged to none so much as the banker Jugget Seit, for bringing about this revolution. — D. H.

* The grounds upon which the Bengal Committee were ultimately induced to come to a resolution to join the confederacy against Suraj-u-Dowlah, are fully explained in their letter of the 14th July, 1757, to the Secret Committee [a] in England. They state, that they had no doubt but that the Nabob would attack them whenever the squadron and the troops left the river; that they not only had no confidence in his friendship, but were convinced he was the determined enemy of the English, and was using every means in his power to bring the French to Bengal: that from his conduct in this and numerous other cases, it was certain he would seize the first opportunity of extirpating the Company; and lastly, they express their opinion, that from the detestation in which Suraj-u-Dowlah was held, the confederacy formed against him must succeed; but that, if they withheld their aid, they could expect no advantages from such success: whereas, if they took a prominent part, they might look for remuneration for past losses, and full security against any future misfortune, similar to that to which their weakness had before exposed them.

[a] Vide Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 216.

bined with a firm belief that the means which presented themselves were the best to effect that change: but it was the genius of Clive which guided their councils, and pointed out the road by which he was to lead them to safety and honour, through a labyrinth of such apparently inextricable windings that even his experience and courage were at times startled by its intricacies.

Clive, having received several despatches from Mr. Watts *, which, while they established the justice of the conclusions regarding what was to be expected from Suraj-u-Dowlah, pointed out the dangers of delay, wrote to Admiral Watson, requesting his opinion on the measures to be pursued; but the Admiral declined giving it; "as the squadron," he observes, "is at present in no condition to act; or, indeed, if the ships were, do I know of any use they would be at present in this river, when every thing is

* Mr. Watts writes, under date the 14th of April: — "The Nabob, before our success at Chandernagore, threatened, in the presence of Runjutroy and others, to impale, or cut off my head; and yesterday repeated those threats in the presence of Jugget Seit, Monichund, Cojah Wazeed, Meer Abdul Caussim, Runjutroy, and Omichund. I write this for yours and the Colonel's notice alone, and desire no public affair may be made of it, for I despise what the Nabob can do to me, and would not have you desist from any vigorous measures you may intend to pursue on my account."

done that they are capable of undertaking. You, gentlemen of the Committee, will therefore best judge what steps will now be necessary for the Company's interest." *

In a letter to Mr. Watts, of the 23d of April, Clive expresses the following sentiments upon the extraordinary conduct of the Nabob: — "I have received both your favours of the 14th and 18th. The Nabob's behaviour makes it very difficult to pursue such measures as may not, in their consequence, be approved or disapproved of according to our success. His late transactions carry with them the appearance of an amendment in the situation of his affairs: surely he has received some hope of Bussy's approach, or has accommodated matters with the Patans. If they were approaching, I think he would never put us at defiance, which I think he has done by his message to you.

"If he has ordered the French out of his dominions, why are they to take the route to Patna? a route directly contrary to that of Golconda. I wish, at all events—now the French are gone—you would send the money and effects to Calcutta immediately, for fear of the worst.

"If Mr. Law and all the gentlemen could be

* 22d April, 1757.

prevailed upon to allow the common men to be made prisoners, and themselves to be free on condition of going to Pondicherry, it would be better than letting them travel through the country."

Clive, in this letter, alludes to a message which the Nabob had desired Mr. Watts to send to him, intimating that the conduct of the English, in the proceedings regarding the French, "looked more like a desire to rekindle war, than having their thoughts fixed on trade and merchandise."

In a private letter from the Resident to Mr. Walsh *, secretary of Colonel Clive (dated 20th April), he observes, "Before I received your letter enclosing the Nabob's, that letter which was forwarded by Nuncomar † was delivered, on which the Nabob was much displeased; and on our vakeel going to him this afternoon, before he had time to speak or deliver the Colonel's letter to him he ordered him out of his presence; and said, that notwithstanding, to satisfy us, he had permitted us to take Chandernagore, and had ordered the French here out of his dominions, yet we were not contented, but were

* Mr. Walsh was paymaster to the Madras troops, but acted throughout the expedition as secretary to Colonel Clive.

† Governor of Hooghley.

continually plaguing him with letters about delivering up the French and their effects: therefore, having done so much to please us, his patience was worn out. He could suffer no more, but saw he must be obliged again to march down against us."

Other circumstances occurred at this period, which distinctly proved the jealous and hostile spirit with which Suraj-u-Dowlah continued to view the English. A small detachment of sepoys, under Captain Grant, had been ordered to Gossimbazar; but Mr. Watts wrote, desiring that officer to return. In his letter to Clive, of the 28th of April, he observes, "As the Nabob will not allow a Tellingy * soldier, or any ammunition, to come this way, and as he has threatened to treat those he takes severely, I thought it prudent to desire Captain Grant and his party to return, lest they should meet with some affront."

Clive, in a letter to Mr. Watts †, observes, "After the Nabob's last message I cannot depend upon his friendship; and therefore shall get

* Tellingy means a native of Tellingana, one of the ancient Hindu divisions of India, which includes the north-eastern parts of the Deckan. Some tribes of the natives of Tellingana have long been celebrated as foot-soldiers; hence the term Tellingy and sepoy became synonymous.

† 23d April, 1757.

every thing ready for a march. I shall consult the Committee, and not willingly undertake any thing which may occasion a rupture without I am obliged to it; notwithstanding I shall write the Nabob in high terms. I dare say there will be no objection to sparing the fifty cannon, if the Nabob will but convince us of his sincerity of intention by securing the French."

A letter of the same date was despatched to Mr. Collet, in charge of the factory at Cossimbazar.

"I think it necessary to advise you," Clive states, "that at a committee held here this day, it was agreed, in consideration of the uncertainty of the Nabob's disposition, to withdraw all money and effects from the subordinates as fast as possible, and that no more than a corporal and six men, with the Bucksarries, should remain at Cossimbazar; the rest to return here with the treasure. I shall send up by boat two of my officers and twenty sepoys, with some spare arms and ammunition, to escort the treasure likewise; as most of your people are deserters, and I am uncertain if with arms. You will please to get the treasure properly packed up, and provide boats, as well for that as the men of the garrison who are to come. No particular secrecy is to be used in this matter, but to be transacted in the usual manner."

Notwithstanding these preparations, it appears that even at this period hopes were entertained of Suraj-u-Dowlah changing his proceedings so far as to make it possible to preserve peace with him. In answer to a letter * from Mr. Watts, Clive observes, "I wrote the Nabob a letter a few days ago, which will reconcile him to us, and calm his resentment:" but emphatically adds, "If he is resolved to sacrifice us, we must avoid it by striking the first blow."

Suraj-u-Dowlah continued, however, to pursue his course in the most infatuated manner, while the storm gathered thick around him. The state of the Nabob's mind, and the intrigues now forming, are strongly depicted in a secret letter † from Clive to Admiral Watson. "I should be very glad," he observes, "to pay you my respects at Calcutta; but the critical situation of the Company's affairs will not admit of my quitting the camp on any consideration. The last letter I wrote the Nabob he tore in a violent passion, and ordered our vakeel out of the durbar. He sent for Meer Jaffier, and offered him ten lacs of rupees if he would march down and destroy us; and he has been often heard to say the would extirpate the English. The next morning he was sorry for what he had done,

* 28th April, 1757. † 26th April, 1757.

sent for the vakeel, and gave him a dress. I have not received a letter from him this many a day. In short, there is such a confusion and discontent at Moorshedabad, from the Nabob's weak conduct and tyranny, that I have received certain advice of several great men; among whom are Jugget Seit and Meer Jaffier, being in league together to cut him off, and set up Khuda Yar Khan Lattee, a man of great family, power, and riches, supported tooth and nail by Jugget Seit."

Clive, at this critical juncture, was not merely left alone to the resources of his own mind, but was embarrassed by the conduct of those who should have aided him. The Committee of Calcutta, though they had approved of the communications which had passed between him and Meer Jaffier, now stated their opinion that the negotiation into which he had entered was of too delicate a nature to be trusted to paper, and proposed sending a confidential European agent to Mr. Watts. The Committee also expressed themselves dissatisfied with the expense which attended the troops having remained so long in the field.

Clive, in his reply to this letter*; after stating his surprise at its purport, observes, "You surely forget, gentlemen, that at a committee

* 29th April, 1757.

held here as late as the 23d, I laid my letters before you, consulted with you on the general measures to be taken in the conduct of our affairs with the Government, and was desired to manage a certain secret correspondence at the durbar. What has since come to my knowledge I have communicated to the President; and, indeed, I cannot think I have ever been deficient in acquainting you with all particulars, and advising with you whenever the subject was important enough to require it.

"It will not be improper to send a European of capacity and secrecy, as you observe, to Mr. Watts; but if you mean thereby, that nothing on so nice a subject is to be committed to writing, you may have occasion to despatch many such persons before the negotiation is concluded. Let me observe to you, a correspondence in cyphers, as now practised, is not less secret, and doubtless much more expeditious, which is of great moment in particular conjunctures.

"By your manner of expressing yourselves, with regard to putting the troops into garrison, it somewhat appears as if I had unnecessarily kept them in the field. Give me leave to say, gentlemen, I am equally desirous with you of saving every possible expense to the Honourable Company, and that it is long that I have waited for an opportunity of going into quarters: but

let me ask you, whether the situation of affairs has admitted of it hitherto? I fully intend, in a day or two, to put the coast troops into garrison at Chandernagore, and to send the rest to Calcutta, if nothing very material occurs to prevent it. The former are entirely under my command; and you may be assured, as I will never make use of the power vested in me to the injury of the Honourable Company's affairs, that I will be as far from suffering you to take away any part of it. I say thus much to prevent further disagreeable intimations, which can tend to no good end."

About this period, a letter was received by Clive from the Paishwah Badjerow, expressing his indignation at the treatment the English had received from Suraj-u-Dowlah, and offering his aid to avenge their wrongs. The Paishwah proposed, on their co-operating with his troops in the invasion of Bengal, to repay double the amount of the losses that had been sustained, and to vest the commerce of the Ganges exclusively in the East India Company. Though this letter was delivered by the Mahratta agent at Calcutta, a doubt appears to have been entertained as to the character of the communication. It was even surmised to be an artifice of Suraj-u-Dowlah to discover the real sentiments and designs of the British authorities. Clive, who had no intention of inviting

the destructive aid of a Mahratta army, sent the letter to the Nabob, concluding, that, if it was genuine, he would receive such a mark of confidence as a proof of friendship; — and if he had himself forged it, there could not be a more complete counteraction of his design. The letter was genuine; and the Nabob expressed himself much gratified by the conduct of Clive, who, on this occasion and others, endeavoured to remove the suspicions that Suraj-u-Dowlah entertained of the designs of the confederates.

As one means of lulling him into security, he ordered the English troops into garrison, stating that he had done so in expectation that the Nabob would follow his example, by recalling the detachment from Plassey. He observed, in a letter to the Nabob, "that, while the armies continued in the field, their enemies would be endeavouring to interrupt that perfect harmony and friendship which subsisted between them; that he had therefore put his army into quarters; and though he had no reason to doubt his Excellency's strict adherence to, and full compliance with, all the articles of the treaty, yet, nevertheless, he wished he could disappoint those hopes their mutual enemies entertained, by withdrawing his army from Plassey; and that he would hasten the payment of the money, and other articles of the treaty."

The Nabob expressed great satisfaction with these proofs of friendship; but, either from a suspicion of their sincerity, or from an obstinate perseverance in his plans against the English, he limited himself to promises, and met them with no corresponding acts.

Clive, alluding to his continuing the troops at Plassey, observes, in a letter to Mr. Watts, of the 30th of April, — "The Nabob is a villain, and cannot be trusted; he must be overset, or we must fall." And in a subsequent communication of the 2d of May, he gives him full authority to come to a settlement with Meer Jaffier upon terms which he specifies, stating, also, that every thing is prepared for immediate action. In this letter he observes, "Your letter of the 29th is come to hand, — every thing is settled with the Committee, — enclosed are the proposals, and if there be any other articles which you and Omichund think necessary to be added, you have full liberty to do so, or leave out any thing which you think may hurt our cause, or give disgust. As for any gratuity the new Nabob may bestow on the troops, it is left to his generosity, and to your and Omichund's management. — Now for business.

"To-morrow morning we decamp; part of our forces go to Calcutta, the other will go into garrison here; and to take away all suspicion, I

have ordered all the artillery and tumbrils to be embarked in boats and sent to Calcutta.

"I have wrote the Nabob a soothing letter: this accompanies another of the same kind, and one to Mohun Lal agreeable to your desire. Enter into business with Meer Jaffier as soon as you please. I am ready, and will engage to be at Nusary in twelve hours after I receive your letter, which place is to be the rendezvous of the whole army. The major*, who commands at Calcutta, has all ready to embark at a minute's warning, and has boats sufficient to carry artillery-men and stores to Nusary. I shall march by land and join him there: we will then proceed to Moorshedabad, or the place we are to be joined at, directly. Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing; — that I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs; and that if he fails seizing him, we shall be strong enough to drive him out of the country. Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left."

Clive, in his letter to Mr. Watts, of the 5th of May, expressed his opinion, that Omichund, on account of his services, should have all his losses made good by an express article in the treaty. He also proposed, that a sum, not exceeding fifty

* Major Kilpatrick.

lacs of rupees, should be granted for the reimbursement of private losses; and that ten lacs should be given to the Company for the expense of the expedition, and as a gratuity for the army.

At this critical period, it must have been a satisfaction to Clive to receive such aid as could be afforded by Admiral Watson, who, though he declined, for very sound reasons, any share of the responsibility of an enterprise, in which he could not co-operate, and offered his honest advice as to the hazards with which he thought it would be attended, no sooner perceived that Clive was determined to proceed alone towards his object, than he made every effort in his power to strengthen him, and expressed wishes for his success, in a manner that showed how cordially he went along with him in every point, except in the anticipation of the result.

When quite prepared to commence operations, Clive made an application for two hundred seamen to accompany the troops, with which the Admiral immediately complied. He appears, however, from the letter in which he promises this aid, to have still entertained fears for the result of the expedition. "I don't think," he observes, "your letters convey the most promising appearance of success. You cannot, therefore, be too cautious to prevent a false step being

taken, which might be of very fatal consequences to our affairs."

This letter was written on the 29th of May. In one of the 17th of June, we find him inspired with better hopes. "I am glad to hear," he states, "that Meer Jaffier's party increases. I hope every thing will turn out in the expedition to your wishes, and that I may soon have to congratulate you on the success of it. I most heartily pray for your health and a speedy return crowned with laurels."

This letter has importance, as written after the troops had marched, and after all arrangements connected with the intended enterprise had been completed. Admiral Watson had been informed of every transaction, and though he might have differed in opinion upon many points, and have withheld himself from a participation in others, it is a reflection upon his memory to believe that he could, at this period, have written in such terms had he entertained the sentiments regarding any part of Clive's conduct, which were afterwards imputed to him.

The warm temper of this gallant seaman might have led to the occasional utterance of some hasty and unqualified opinions; but his manly mind was incapable of such a compromise of his honest feelings, as to express himself in terms of friendship and regard for the individual whose

acts he was at the same moment describing * as dishonourable and iniquitous.

We discover from Clive's private letters, and those of Mr. Walsh, his secretary, that, from the period when Meer Jaffier's overture was accepted, he considered that the revolution was effected. He remained, however, in a state of the most anxious solicitude. He dreaded delay, both as it tended to increase the hazard of discovery, and as the season of the rains was fast approaching, when military operations would be impracticable. Yet it was difficult to accelerate the execution of a plan, in which so many interests were to be consulted, and which was liable to be impeded by so many events. At one time there appeared great danger lest it should be altogether defeated by a violent and premature rupture between Meer Jaffier and the Nabob; nor was the reconciliation that took place between these parties of a nature calculated to give Clive confidence in his new ally, who, within a few days, had sworn upon the Koran to be faithful both to the English and to their enemy Suraj-u-Dowlah.

* Such are the terms said to have been used by Admiral Watson, in speaking of those who had signed the treaty (proposed by Clive) to deceive Omichund. This is stated in evidence by Captain Brereton (Parl. Reports, vol. iii. p. 151.); but a more general and inconclusive testimony perhaps never was given.

Notwithstanding these changes, Mr. Watts continued confident in Meer Jaffier and those with whom he was combined; but he had for some time taken alarm at Omichund, with whom he had been associated in all his negotiations at Moorshedabad.

This Hindu merchant possessed great wealth, and was among the sufferers at the capture of Calcutta. He had, on that occasion, as well as on others, made himself very useful to the English; and, though known to be one of the most avaricious and grasping of human beings, yet the reputation he had for good sense, and the obvious and admitted profits and advantages which he must derive from being faithful to the trust reposed in him, banished all fear of his treachery, and led to his employment as one of the most active instruments in forming the combination by which the Nabob was to be dethroned.

Meer Jaffier early expressed his doubts of Omichund; whose conduct, in several instances, had made the same impression on the mind of Mr. Watts. It appeared to both, that the success or failure of the enterprise was considered, by this sordid man, as secondary to the promotion of his personal interests; and that he chiefly valued the confidence placed in him, as he could make it subservient to his private views. Clive

appears to have been very reluctant to admit the truth of the suspicions entertained of Omichund; and it was not till proof which he deemed conclusive as to his treachery was brought forward, that he consented, with the Committee, to have his name left out of the treaty.

Mr. Watts, in his letter to Colonel Clive, of the 17th of May, states, "Meer Jaffier is determined he will by no means trust Omichund. If I had followed the interested counsel of the latter, all affairs would have been overset, all confidence of us lost. Contrary to Petrus's* and my advice, he went yesterday to the Nabob, and told him he had a secret of great importance to communicate to him; which, if discovered, he should lose his life. The Nabob promised secrecy; on which he told him the English had sent two gentlemen to Ganjam, to consult with M. Bussy; that we had made peace together, and that he was coming here to join us. By this lie, which he himself acquainted me he had told the Nabob, he has gained the Nabob's favour, who has granted him a perwannah on the Burdwan Rajah, for the paying him four lacs of rupees which he owes him, as also express orders for the payment of the ready money the Nabob had taken of his, and for the delivery of the remainder of his goods: he was till ten

* Petrus, an Armenian, was the agent of Meer Jaffier.

o'clock at night receiving them. This lie of his, I am apprehensive, will alarm the Nabob, and prevent his withdrawing his army, which will be very detrimental to our scheme; and for this reason Petrus and I advised him positively against this measure when he proposed it; but self-interest overruled. We are outwardly great friends, and it is necessary to appear so." Mr. Watts, in the concluding paragraph of his letter, adds, "Cojah Wazeed desires his respects to you. He is so strictly looked after that he cannot write. From him I have learned many particulars relating to Omichund, which would be too tedious to mention: they will astonish you."

These acts, however, were only the prelude to one more daring. Omichund waited on Mr. Watts, when all was prepared for action, and threatened instant discovery of the whole plot, unless it was settled that he should receive thirty lacs of rupees, in reimbursement of losses and reward of services. Omichund had recently received from the Nabob, as the reward of his feigned attachment, an order for four lacs of rupees, the estimated amount of his losses at Calcutta. The ground of the present demand, therefore, rested exclusively on his means of enforcing it, from being in possession of a secret which, if revealed, must not only sacrifice the

life of Mr. Watts, of Meer Jaffier, and of all connected with them, but prove most injurious, if not ruinous, to the interests of the English. They, if the objects of the confederacy were defeated, could only hope for safety by calling in the Mahrattas; whose invasion, whatever other consequences might attend it, was certain to spread desolation over the whole country.

Mr. Watts, under dread of the consequences of the threatened discovery, soothed Omichund by promises; while he conveyed, as speedily as he could, intelligence of his conduct to Clive. The account of this transaction was probably communicated through Cojah Wazeed, or some confidential person, as we find no details of what passed with Omichund in any of Mr. Watts's letters.* In one to Mr. Scrafton, of the 20th

* The evidence of Mr. Sykes, as taken before a Committee of the House of Commons, fully corroborates all that Mr. Watts represented regarding the substance and manner of Omichund's demand, as well as the threat by which it was accompanied. Mr. Sykes stated, "That in the year 1757 he was stationed at the subordinate factory called Cossimbazar, in council; that he does not know particularly the terms demanded by Omichund; but that, being on a visit to Mr. Watts, he found him under great anxiety; that he took him aside, and told him that Omichund had been threatening to betray them to Suraj-u-Dowlah, and would have them all murdered that night, unless he would give some assurances that the sum promised him (by Mr. Watts) should be made good; that, upon the visit to Mr. Watts, he further said that

of May, he merely states, "We are deceived,—Omichund is a villain; but this to yourself."

The obvious results of his treachery were not expected to deter Omichund from his purpose: he was believed to be so infatuated by the love of gain, that neither the ties of former service, nor the principles of honesty, would weigh against his desire of enriching himself. Such was the opinion of all who knew him; and there appeared no medium between submitting to his exorbitant demands, or deceiving him into a belief that he would receive, in due season, the exorbitant price he had fixed upon his fidelity.

Though Clive was aware of the sordid character of Omichund, yet, deeming him an useful agent, he had been desirous that he should be treated with favour and liberality. He had advocated his cause when his character was before questioned; and had censured Mr. Watts on account of the suspicions he had frequently expressed of his honesty. These circumstances made him receive with equal surprise and indignation the incontrovertible proofs now offered of his guilt. Viewing him, from the position which he had taken, as a public enemy, he considered (as he stated at the period, and publicly

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he was under the greatest anxiety how to counteract the designs of Omichund." — Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 145.

avowed * afterwards), every artifice that could deceive him to be not only defensible, but just and proper.

"I have your last letter †," he observes to Mr.

* Lord Clive, being examined by the Committee of the House of Commons regarding the fictitious treaty, stated, "That when Mr. Watts had nearly accomplished the means of carrying that revolution into execution, he acquainted him by letter that a fresh difficulty had started; that Omichund had insisted upon five per cent. on all the Nabob's treasures, and thirty lacs in money; and threatened, if he did not comply with that demand, he would immediately acquaint Suraj-u-Dowlah with what was going on, and Mr. Watts should be put to death. That, when he received this advice, he thought art and policy warrantable in defeating the purposes of such a villain; and that his Lordship himself formed the plan of the fictitious treaty, to which the Committee consented. It was sent to Admiral Watson, who objected to the signing of it; but, to the best of his remembrance, gave the gentleman who carried it (Mr. Lushington) leave to sign his name upon it; that his Lordship never made any secret of it; he thinks it warrantable in such a case, and would do it again a hundred times; he had no interested motive in doing it, and did it with a design of disappointing the expectations of a rapacious man; that he never heard Mr. Watts had made a promise to Omichund of any money, directly or indirectly; that when he was last abroad, he had given the same account, which is entered in the public proceedings; that Omichund was employed only as an agent to Mr. Watts, as having most knowledge of Suraj-u-Dowlah's court, and had commission to deal with three or four more of the court. Omichund's only chance of obtaining retribution was depending on this treaty; he did not believe that Omichund was known to Meer Jaffier, but through Mr. Watts." — Parl. Reports, vol. iii. p. 149.

† 19th May, 1757.

Watts, in his communication on this subject, "including the articles of agreement. I must confess the tenor of them surprised me much. I immediately repaired to Calcutta; and at a committee held, both the admirals and gentlemen agree that Omichund is the greatest villain upon earth; and that now he appears in the strongest light, what he was always suspected to be, a villain in grain. However, to counterplot this scoundrel, and at the same time to give him no room to suspect our intentions, enclosed you will receive two forms of agreement; the one real, to be strictly kept by us; the other fictitious. In short, this affair concluded, Omichund will be treated as he deserves. This you will acquaint Meer Jaffier with."

Two treaties were accordingly framed; one real, the other fictitious. In the former there was no mention of Omichund; the latter had an article which expressly stipulated that he should receive twenty lacs of rupees; and Mr. Watts was desired to inform him, that "thirty lacs" was not inserted, as it might give rise to suspicion; but that a commission of five per cent. should be given to him upon all sums received from the Nabob, which would fully amount to the other ten lacs. Though Omichund appeared satisfied with this proceeding, Mr. Watts conceived there was no safety till he left Moorshedabad. But he had yet received only half the money for which

the Nabob had given him orders: and such was his avarice, that he could not suffer the thoughts of leaving the other half unpaid, even though he stayed at the hazard * of his life.

Though Mr. Watts had succeeded in persuading Omichund that he could be employed by Clive in a manner that would make up all losses, and had prevailed upon him to accompany Mr. Scrafton, that gentleman, when he reached Cossimbazar, missed his companion; and the messenger despatched in search of him found the old man seated with the Nabob's treasurer, trying to obtain some more of the promised money. Seeing this fruitless, he set out on his journey; but again disappeared. When he rejoined Mr. Scrafton, he said he had been to visit his friend Roydullûb, at Plassey, from whom he was surprised to learn that his name was not in the treaty; but Mr. Scrafton told him, with truth, that the last secret treaty had not, for

* Omichund had been on the most intimate footing with the Nabob, who, trusting to him for secret information, was averse to his leaving Moorshedabad. But as he now desired to go to Calcutta, he told Mr. Scrafton to remove this impediment, by applying for a present which the Nabob had promised to make the British commanders in February. This promise, it appears, was made to Omichund, who afterwards pledged himself to conceal it. Suraj-u-Dowlah, thinking he had broken that pledge, was much enraged, and as anxious for his departure as he had been before for his remaining at his court.

various reasons, been communicated to Roydullub.

When Omichund arrived at Calcutta, he was received by Clive and by the members of the Committee with apparent cordiality; for Mr. Watts had written that his life, and those of all at Moorshedabad concerned in the confederacy, depended upon his entertaining no suspicion of being deceived. Not satisfied, however, with the enormous amount he deemed himself certain of receiving, this avaricious old man commenced further intrigues.

In a letter, under date the 8th of June, Mr. Watts, after repelling the charge of having been duped, and of having improperly submitted to delays and evasions, refers to Omichund as the real cause of the impediments that had occurred; and to satisfy Clive of the fact, he transmits him a letter to Petrus, of the following purport: — "Omichund's compliments to Petrus. There's letters gone down for Mr. Watts, to forbid his coming down till permission is given him from hence. You and I are one; let us consider what is for our own interests, and act so as to endeavour to make it pass that we have had the whole management of this affair. If our friend is not set out, keep him a few days. Affairs are not yet settled here; hereafter I will write you the particulars. You have a good un-

derstanding, therefore there's no occasion to write you much. Our success depends upon each other; all my hopes are in you."

This communication aggravated the impressions before entertained of Omichund's conduct, and every caution was taken to avoid giving him any opportunity of further interference; it being quite evident, that his views in being employed were exclusively limited to pecuniary gain, to which he was ready to sacrifice every other object.

Mr. Watts having communicated to the Committee of Calcutta, that Meer Jaffier was disposed to give a sum to the amount of forty lacs of rupees to the army and navy, through whose exertions he hoped to mount the throne; Mr. Becher, a member of the Committee, stated, that as they (the Committee) had set the machine in motion, it was reasonable and proper that they should be considered.* This suggestion, as may be imagined, was unanimously adopted, and Clive stated to Mr. Watts†, that the Committee had agreed, "that Meer Jaffier's private engagement should be obtained in writing, to make them (the Committee, in which you are included) a present of twelve lacs of rupees, and a present

* Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 145.

† Letter from Col. Clive to Mr. Watts, May 19th.

of forty lacs to the army and navy, over and above what is stipulated in the agreement.

All preliminaries being arranged, and Meer Jaffier having agreed to separate himself, with a large body of troops, from the Nabob's army, and join the English on their advance, Clive determined to commence operations. The intelligence from Moorshedabad was still unsatisfactory; but relying on Mr. Watts's assurance, that Meer Jaffier continued firm to his engagement, he re-assembled his army, which, in the beginning of May, had been sent into quarters, partly in Chandernagore, partly in Calcutta. On the 12th of June the troops which were in Calcutta, reinforced by one hundred and fifty sailors from the fleet, proceeded to Chandernagore. Next day, one hundred seamen being left as a garrison in the place, the whole army was put in motion, the Europeans, artillery, and stores proceeding up the river in boats, while the sepoys marched in the same direction by the high road. On the 14th, at Culna, they were joined by Mr. Watts, who, on the preceeding day, had succeeded in making his escape from Moorshedabad. Continuing their course up the right bank of the river, the army, on the 16th, halted at Patlee; whence, on the 17th, Major Coote, with a party, was pushed forward to attack the fort of Cutwa, which next day fell into his hands. The same evening, the army

reached Cutwa and encamped in the plain; but on the 19th the rainy season began with such violence, that the troops were obliged to seek shelter in huts, and in the town.

Meanwhile the flight of Mr. Watts had greatly alarmed Suraj-u-Dowlah, whose terrors were increased by the receipt of a letter from Clive, despatched the day on which the army set out from Chandernagore, in which all the injuries and wrongs he had inflicted on the Company were recapitulated; and while he was reproached for connecting himself with the French, he was accused of not fulfilling the treaty into which he had entered; of having infringed its main article, by proffering only a fifth part of the sum to be paid into the treasury, and yet demanding a receipt for the whole*; and of cherishing the intention of attacking the English settlements, the moment the absence of the fleet and troops gave him a prospect of doing so with success.

For these reasons, Clive stated in this letter†, "he had determined (with the approbation of all who are charged with the Company's affairs) to proceed immediately to Cossimbazar, and

* This demand of a full acquittance, on paying one fifth of what was due, had been made some weeks before through Mr. Watts. It had been rejected with indignation by Admiral Watson and Col. Clive.

† Scrafton's Letters, p. 88.

submit their disputes to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier, Roydullub, Jugget Seit, and others of his great men: that if it should be found that he (the Colonel) deviated from the treaty, he then swore to give up all further claims; but that if it appeared his Excellency had broke it, he should then demand satisfaction for all the losses sustained by the English, and all the charges of their army and navy." He concluded by telling him, "that the rains being so near, and it requiring many days to receive an answer, he found it necessary to wait upon him immediately!"

The style of this communication, and the military movements which followed, left no doubt as to the hostile intentions of the English; and the Nabob hastened to assemble his whole force, with which he advanced to Plassey.

Clive marched with an army * of about three thousand men, and nine pieces of artillery, and was for some days, after the commencement of operations, in a state of extreme anxiety, from

* Clive's force consisted of—
Six hundred and fifty European infantry,
One hundred topases,
One hundred Malabar Portuguese,
One hundred and fifty artillery, including fifty seamen;
Two thousand one hundred sepoys;
Eight six-pounders;
One howitzer.

there being no appearance of Meer Jaffier's separating himself and his adherents from the Nabob; whence it might be concluded, either that he was treacherous, or that his party was much weaker than had been represented.

Under these impressions Clive wrote to the Secret Committee*: "The party I sent has taken Cutwa town and fort. Both are strong. Notwithstanding which, I feel the greatest anxiety at the little intelligence I receive from Meer Jaffier; and, if he is not treacherous, his sangfroid or want of strength will, I fear, overset the expedition. I am trying a last effort, by means of a Brahmin, to prevail upon him to march out and join us. I have appointed Plassey the place of rendezvous, and have told him at the same time, unless he gives this or some other sufficient proof of the sincerity of his intentions, I will not cross the river: this, I hope, will meet with your approbation. I shall act with such caution as not to risk the loss of our forces; and, whilst we have them, we may always have it in our power to bring about a revolution, should the present not succeed. They say, there is a considerable quantity of grain in and about this place. If we can collect eight or ten thousand maunds†, we may maintain our situation during the rains,

* Clive's letters to the Secret Committee, June 19th, 1757.

† A maund is 80 pounds.

which will greatly distress the Nabob; and either reduce him to terms which may be depended upon, or give us time to bring in the Beer-Boom * Rajah, Mahrattas, or Ghazee-u-Deen.† I desire you will give your sentiments freely, how you think I should act, if Meer Jaffier can give us no assistance."

On the 21st of June, two days after he had despatched this letter, Clive held a council of war‡, to which he proposed the following question: — "Whether in our present situation, without assistance, and on our own bottom, it would be prudent to attack the Nabob; or

* A considerable province of the kingdom of Bengal, the Rajah (or Prince) of which was hostile to Suraj-u-Dowlah.

† Ghazee-u-Deen, the eldest son of the celebrated Nizam-ul-Mulk, was at this period chief minister of Delhi, and had almost uncontrolled power.

‡ The following is the list of the officers of this council, and the order in which they voted: —

Negative.	*For immediate attack.*
Robt. Clive.	Eyre Coote.
James Kilpatrick.	G. Alex. Grant.
Archd. Grant.	G. Muir.
Geo. Fred. Goupp.	Chas. Palmer.
Andrew Armstrong.	Robt. Campbell.
Thos. Rumbold.	Peter Carstairs.
Christian Firkan.	W. Jennings.
John Corneille.	
H. Popham.	

The query and list of the officers are transcribed from the original proceedings of the council of war, as found in the Clive MSS.

whether we should wait till joined by some country power?"

A majority of the officers composing the council voted against an immediate attack; a minority for giving battle to the Nabob; and at the head of the latter was Eyre Coote, subsequently so distinguished in Indian history.

Clive, though he had voted with the majority, appears, almost immediately afterwards, to have satisfied himself, that there was no other road to safety and honour, but by moving forward; and without consulting * any individual, much less the council of war he had so unwisely assembled, on the very evening of the day on which the council had been held †, changing his purpose, he determined to march against the enemy, and accordingly gave orders for his army to cross the river the following morning.

It is stated ‡, that before he carried this resolution into effect, he had received a letter from Meer Jaffier, which, though it in some degree removed the doubts he had before entertained

* It has been asserted that Clive was induced to change his opinion by the representations of Major Coote. This was contradicted by the latter, in his evidence before the House of Commons. He said, "After the council of war, Lord Clive spoke to him first, unasked, of the army marching, without his having mentioned a word to him upon the subject." — Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 153.

† June 21st.

‡ Scrafton's Letters, p. 90.

of the sincerity of that leader, confirmed him in his opinion, that the success of the enterprize must wholly depend upon the advance of the British troops.

Though mature deliberation appears to have convinced Clive, that the object he had in view, the security of the English in Bengal, quite warranted the hazard which was incurred for its attainment, he still proceeded with that caution which was necessary in an enterprize, where the safety of the whole of the military force in this part of India might be compromised by the treachery or cowardice of a native chief, and where even success in a battle would not have accomplished his purpose, unless those with whom the English interests were associated proved true to their engagements.

It is only by considering the circumstances in which he was placed that we can understand the hesitating conduct of Clive previous to his advance to Plassey, the defensive character of the action, and the solicitude * which he

* Major Kilpatrick, observing an opportunity of attacking an advanced party, under a French officer, by whom the troops in the grove were annoyed, put himself at the head of two companies and two guns, to charge; sending, at the same time, to inform Clive of what he had done. The latter hastened to the spot, commanded the party back to the grove, and severely reprimanded the Major for acting without his orders. It has been stated, by those who were desirous

showed to repress that ardour and forward spirit in those under him, which on ordinary occasions it was his habit and his pride to stimulate and encourage. It is obvious, that his qualities as a soldier, in this short and almost bloodless, but eventful campaign, were rendered strictly subordinate to the talents of the statesman.

At sunrise next morning * the army began to pass the Hooghley, and at four in the afternoon were all landed on the left bank of the river. The boats were then towed up the stream with great toil, accompanied by the army, and having advanced fifteen miles in eight hours, about one in the morning of the 23d of June, reached Plassey. The troops immediately took possession of an adjoining grove.†

Clive's intelligence had led him to expect that the enemy lay a few miles from Cossimbazar; but a rapid march had already brought them on to the fortified camp so long occupied by a part of the Nabob's forces near Plassey: and soon after he had taken his ground, the

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of detracting from Clive's fame, that he was asleep in a hunting-house, which he had made his head-quarters, when the account was brought him of Kilpatrick's attack. This assertion has been denied; but, if admitted, it will prove no more than that this extraordinary man could give, amid such scenes, a few minutes to necessary repose.

* June 22d. † Orme, vol. ii. p. 171.

sound of drums, clarions, and cymbals distinctly heard, convinced him, that the whole force of the enemy was encamped about a mile off. Guards were immediately stationed, and the troops were permitted to take rest for the night.

At sunrise the enemy, now aware of his march, issued from their camp in all their force, with their artillery, and commenced a heavy cannonade. Clive, who expected a communication from Meer Jaffier, looked anxiously for its arrival: but the messenger, who on the morning of this eventful day was charged with a note from that officer, never delivered it. Still, however, Clive watched with anxiety to see his friends separate from his foes, ready to take advantage of that trepidation and confusion which such movements must produce. The charge of the English forces was accelerated by one of the Nabob's principal commanders* being killed: Clive advanced to an easy victory. But the account of the events which preceded this battle, the occurrences which gave success to it, and its results, are clearly and fully stated in the following letter, written by Clive a month after he reached Moorshedabad, to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors. In this

* Moodeen Khan.

letter, which is dated the 26th of July, Clive observes: —

"I gave you an account of the taking of Chandernagore; the subject of this address is an event of much higher importance, no less than the entire overthrow of Nabob Suraj-u-Dowlah, and the placing of Meer Jaffier on the throne. I intimated, in my last, how dilatory Suraj-u-Dowlah appeared in fulfilling the articles of the treaty. This disposition not only continued but increased, and we discovered that he was designing our ruin, by a conjunction with the French. To this end Monsieur Bussy was pressingly invited to come into this province, and Monsieur Law of Cossimbazar (who before had been privately entertained in his service) was ordered to return from Patna.

"About this time some of his principal officers made overtures to us for dethroning him. At the head of these was Meer Jaffier, then Bukhshee to the army, a man as generally esteemed as the other was detested. As we had reason to believe this disaffection pretty general, we soon entered into engagements with Meer Jaffier to put the crown on his head. All necessary preparations being completed with the utmost secrecy, the army, consisting of about one thousand Europeans, and two thousand sepoys, with eight pieces of cannon, marched from Chan-

dernagore on the 13th, and arrived on the 18th at Cutwa Fort, which was taken without opposition. The 22d, in the evening, we crossed the river, and landing on the island, marched straight for Plassey Grove, where we arrived by one in the morning. At daybreak, we discovered the Nabob's army moving towards us, consisting, as we since found, of about fifteen thousand horse, and thirty-five thousand foot, with upwards of forty pieces of cannon. They approached apace, and by six began to attack with a number of heavy cannon, supported by the whole army, and continued to play on us very briskly for several hours, during which our situation was of the utmost service to us, being lodged in a large grove, with good mud banks. To succeed in an attempt on their cannon was next to impossible, as they were planted in a manner round us, and at considerable distances from each other. We therefore remained quiet in our post, in expectation of a successful attack upon their camp at night. About noon, the enemy drew off their artillery, and retired to their camp, being the same which Roy Dullub had left but a few days before, and which he had fortified with a good ditch and breast-work. We immediately sent a detachment, accompanied with two field-pieces, to take possession of a tank with high banks, which was advanced

about three hundred yards above our grove, and from whence the enemy had considerably annoyed us with some cannon managed by Frenchmen. This motion brought them out a second time; but on finding them make no great effort to dislodge us, we proceeded to take possession of one or two more eminences lying very near an angle of their camp, from whence, and an adjacent eminence in their possession, they kept a smart fire of musketry upon us. They made several attempts to bring out their cannon, but our advanced field-pieces played so warmly and so well upon them, that they were always drove back. Their horse exposing themselves a good deal on this occasion, many of them were killed, and among the rest four or five officers of the first distinction, by which the whole army being visibly dispirited and thrown into some confusion, we were encouraged to storm both the eminence and the angle of their camp, which were carried at the same instant, with little or no loss; though the latter was defended (exclusively of blacks) by forty French and two pieces of cannon; and the former by a large body of blacks, both foot and horse. On this, a general rout ensued, and we pursued the enemy six miles, passing upwards of forty pieces of cannon they had abandoned, with an infinite

number of hackaries *, and carriages filled with baggage of all kinds. Suraj-u-Dowlah escaped on a camel, and reaching Moorshedabad early next morning, despatched away what jewels and treasure he conveniently could, and he himself followed at midnight, with only two or three attendants.

"It is computed there are killed of the enemy about five hundred. Our loss amounted to only twenty-two killed, and fifty wounded, and those chiefly blacks. During the warmest part of the action we observed a large body of troops hovering on our right, which proved to be our friends; but as they never discovered themselves by any signal whatsoever, we frequently fired on them to make them keep their distance. When the battle was over, they sent a congratulatory message, and encamped in our neighbourhood that night. The next morning Meer Jaffier paid me a visit, and expressed much gratitude at the service done him, assuring me, in the most solemn manner, that he would faithfully perform his engagement to the English. He then proceeded to the city, which he reached some hours before Suraj-u-Dowlah left it.

"As, immediately on Suraj-u-Dowlah's flight, Meer Jaffier found himself in peaceable possession of the palace, I encamped without, to prevent the

* A species of cart drawn by a couple of bullocks.

inhabitants from being plundered or disturbed; first at Maudipoor, and afterwards at the French factory at Sydabad. However, I sent forward Messrs. Watts and Walsh to inquire into the state of the treasury, and inform me what was transacted at the palace. By their representations I soon found it necessary for me to be present, on many accounts; accordingly, I entered the city on the 29th, with a guard of two hundred Europeans and three hundred sepoys, and took up my quarters in a spacious house and garden near the palace. The same evening I waited on Meer Jaffier, who refused seating himself on the musnud till placed on it by me; which done, he received homage as Nabob from all his courtiers. The next morning he returned my visit; when, after a good deal of discourse on the situation of his affairs, I recommended him to consult Jugget Seit on all occasions, who being a man of sense, and having by far the greatest property among all his subjects, would give him the best advice for settling the kingdom in peace and security.

"On this, he proposed that we should immediately set out together to visit him, which being complied with, solemn engagements were entered into by the three parties, for a strict union and mutual support of each other's interests. Jugget Seit then undertook to use his whole interest at

Delhi (which is certainly very great), to get the Nabob acknowledged by the Mogul, and our late grants confirmed; likewise to procure for us any firmans we might have occasion for.

"The substance of the treaty with the present Nabob is as follows: —

"1st. Confirmation of the mint, and all other grants and privileges in the treaty with the late Nabob.

"2dly. An alliance, offensive and defensive, against all enemies whatever.

"3dly. The French factories and effects to be delivered up, and they never permitted to resettle in any of the provinces.

"4thly. 100 lacs of rupees to be paid to the Company, in consideration of their losses at Calcutta and the expenses of the campaign.

"5thly. 50 lacs to be given to the English sufferers at the loss of Calcutta.

"6thly. 20 lacs to Gentoos, Moors, &c., black sufferers at the loss of Calcutta.

"7thly. 7 lacs to the Armenian sufferers.

"These three last donations to be distributed at the pleasure of the Admiral and gentlemen of Council, including me.

"8thly. The entire property of all lands within the Mahratta ditch, which runs round Calcutta, to be vested in the Company: also, six hundred yards, all round, without the said ditch.

" 9thly. The Company to have the zemindary of the country to the south of Calcutta, lying between the lake and river, and reaching as far as Culpee, they paying the customary rents paid by the former zemindars to the government.

" 10thly. Whenever the assistance of the English troops shall be wanted, their extraordinary charges to be paid by the Nabob.

" 11thly. No forts to be erected by the government on the river side, from Hooghley downwards.

" 12thly. The foregoing articles to be performed without delay, as soon as Meer Jaffier becomes Subadar.

" On examining the treasury, there were found about 150 lacs of rupees, which being too little to answer our demands, much less leave a sufficiency for the Nabob's necessary disbursements, it was referred to Jugget Seit, as a mutual friend, to settle what payment should be made to us; who accordingly determined, that we should immediately receive one half of our demand, — two thirds in money and one third in gold and silver plate, jewels, and goods; and that the other half should be discharged in three years, at three equal and annual payments.

" The part to be paid in money is received and safely arrived at Calcutta; and the goods,

jewels, &c. are now delivered over to us; the major part of which will be bought back by the Nabob for ready money, and on the remaining there will be little or no loss. A large proportion was proposed to have been paid us in jewels; but as they are not a very saleable article, we got the amount reduced one half, and the difference to be made up in money.

"It is impossible as yet to form a judgment how much the granted lands will produce you, as the Europeans are quite ignorant of the extent of the country between the river and lake; but, in order to give you some idea of the value, I'll estimate it at 10 lacs per annum. An officer on the part of the Nabob is already despatched to Calcutta to begin the survey, in company with one of ours. Suraj-u-Dowlah was not discovered till some days after his flight; however, he was at last taken in the neighbourhood of Rajahmahul, and brought to Moorshedabad on the 2d inst., late at night. He was immediately cut off by order of the Nabob's son, and (as it is said) without the father's knowledge. Next morning the Nabob paid me a visit, and thought it necessary to palliate the matter on motives of policy; for that Suraj-u-Dowlah had wrote letters on the road to many of the jemidars of the army, and occasioned some commotions among those in his favour.

" Monsieur Law and his party came as far as Rajahmahul to Suraj-u-Dowlah's assistance, and were within three hours' march of him when he was taken. As soon as they heard of his misfortunes, they returned by forced marches; and, by the last advices, had passed by Patna, on the other side of the river. A party of Europeans and sepoys were quickly despatched after them; but I am doubtful if we shall be able to overtake them before they get out of the Nabob's dominions. Strong letters have been wrote from the Nabob to the Naib of Patna, to distress them all in his power, and to take them prisoners if possible. A compliance with which I am in anxious expectation of.

" I ought to observe, that the French I spoke of in the action were some fugitives from Chandernagore, who had assembled at Sydabad. It was by their advice, and indeed by their hands, that the English factory at Cossimbazar was burned and destroyed, after our gentlemen had quitted it on the renewal of the troubles.

" The present Nabob has every appearance of being firmly and durably seated on the throne.

" The whole country has quietly submitted to him, and even the apprehension of an inroad from the side of Delhi is vanished; so that this great revolution, so happily brought about, seems complete in every respect. I persuade myself

the importance of your possessions now in Bengal will determine you to send out, not only a large and early supply of troops and good officers, but of capable young gentlemen for the civil branches of your business."

CHAP. VI.

THE events which have been so minutely detailed in the preceding chapter are memorable from being connected with the foundation of our Indian empire. They have a peculiar importance to us, as they affect the fame and reputation of the individual by whom this rapid and extraordinary change in the condition of the English in Bengal was effected.

From the period of the capture of Chandernagore, till Meer Jaffier was established upon the throne, Clive was unaided in the great and difficult task he had undertaken. He rested solely upon his own judgment, which in almost all cases was in opposition to that of the persons with whom he was associated.

Admiral Watson, though he had withdrawn himself from any participation in the enterprise, stated honestly and decidedly his doubts of its success. The Select Committee of Calcutta threw off all responsibility. Thus unaided and alone, Clive had to counteract treachery, to stimulate timidity into action, and when the

period arrived, openly and boldly to confront danger. He was throughout this arduous labour supported by the conviction, that the end he sought was indispensable to the interests, and indeed to the safety, of the government he served, and that the means he employed were the only ones by which it could be accomplished. With this conviction he proceeded towards his object with a caution and firmness that have seldom been equalled, and never surpassed.

His success was great beyond all expectation; but it has been erroneously attributed to the battle of Plassey. It was not the result of that action, but of the whole series of his measures, and of the operation of well laid plans carried into execution by the same wise and firm mind by which they had been formed.

The moderation with which Clive exercised the great power which he acquired will be shown hereafter. I shall confine myself in this chapter to a detail of the immediate consequences of his success, and to an examination of his conduct throughout the scenes which preceded and followed the dethronement of Suraj-u-Dowlah; and endeavour to lay all the facts before the reader, in such a manner as will enable him to judge how far Clive has merited the reproaches which have been cast upon his memory by those who have desired to

find in the record of his glory the means of destroying his reputation.

The great amount which Meer Jaffier had stipulated to pay by his first treaty was increased by the addition of the sum of fifty lacs, as a donation to the army and navy, besides a gift to * each of the Members of the Secret Committee, and of Council. In addition to these sums, Meer Jaffier was induced by gratitude and policy, as well as by usage, to make liberal presents to those who had been the immediate instruments of placing him on the throne. No exact account of the latter presents exists on record, but that of Clive is stated by himself to have amounted to sixteen lacs of rupees, or 160,000*l.*

* Though Clive, in his letter to Mr. Watts of the 19th of May, estimates this gift at 12 lacs, the precise amount, and the proportions in which it was to be given, were not settled by Mr. Watts till some time afterwards. The shares made public were as follows:—

To Clive, 280,000 rupees, or 28,000*l.*

To each member of the Committee, 240,000 rupees, or 24,000*l.*

The former amounts are given in the Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 145.; and we find a public letter from Clive, under date the 8th of July, to Mr. Franckland, to the following purport:—

"Please to acquaint the gentlemen of the Council, not of the Committee, that the Nabob has been so generous as to make them a present of 6 lacs of rupees, which is to be paid in like proportions as the public money; viz. half is paid down in money and plate, and the other half will be paid as soon as his circumstances will admit of it."

The treasures of Suraj-u-Dowlah had been greatly over estimated by Mr. Watts, who states, in one letter *, that they were computed to amount to 40,000,000*l.* sterling, a sum so extravagantly beyond what the revenues of the country could have enabled Aliverdi Khan, or his successor, to amass, that it is quite extraordinary how such a belief could have been entertained.

The city of Moorshedabad suffered in no degree from this change. Clive, while he accepted on grounds that he deemed just the liberality of the Prince he had placed upon the throne, so far from laying himself under obligation to others, refused every present offered him by Roy Dullub, Jugget Seit, and the wealthy inhabitants of the capital. This conduct was alike necessary to support his character, and to give an example to the army, with whom the large sum which it was settled they should receive as prize or donation, (for it was indifferently called by both names) had the usual effect of a sudden influx of money among such a body of men.

Disputes arose of a very serious nature, as to the division of prize money with the navy. In order that this, and various other points, should be equitably settled, Clive assembled a council

* Letter to Clive, June 26th, 1757.

of war, to which officers were deputed from every branch of the troops employed. It was agreed, that every question should be decided by the majority; and so selfish were the principles by which many of them were influenced, that, contrary to the strong protest of Clive, a resolution was carried, that the officers * and sailors belonging to the squadron, which came with the army on this expedition, should not share the prize money.

The majority of the Council of War came to a further vote, that the money should be immediately divided; but this Clive thought so unjust to the navy, whose agents were not present, that he immediately over-ruled their votes, and broke up the council. His letter to Admiral Watson of the 7th of July fully explains his conduct on this occāsion.

" I took the first opportunity," he observes, " of a little spare time to call a Council of War for the division of that share of the prize money which belongs to the army. I am sorry to say, that several warm and selfish debates arose;

* The officers and men so excluded became, in consequence, entitled to no more than their share with the naval force in the river, to whom was allotted half the donation given by the Nabob. This share appears to have been less than that of corresponding ranks in the army, with which they had acted, and with whom they had an undoubted right to be put on an equal footing.

and I cannot help thinking, that the officers belonging to the navy with the expedition have had injustice done them, in not being allowed to share agreeable to the land division, which was carried against them by a great majority.—Enclosed I send you the proceedings of the Council of War. The last article, after having been in a manner agreed to, was again brought upon the carpet; and notwithstanding I represented to the gentlemen, in the strongest sense, that the money could not be divided till it was shroffed, and the agents of both parties present, without the greatest injustice to the navy, they still persisted in giving their opinions for an immediate division of the money; upon which I over-ruled their votes, and broke up the Council of War.

"Yesterday I received the enclosed paper and protest, which you have with my answer. I have put those officers who brought the paper in arrest, and ordered Captain Armstrong, one of the ringleaders, down to Calcutta this morning. The Major was deputed to me by the officers to desire I would forget and forgive what was past, upon a proper acknowledgment in writing: I promised to comply with his request, so that I beg you will not make this public, till you hear further from me."

The answer to the officers, of which Clive

sent a copy to the Admiral, is too remarkable a document to be omitted. It singularly exhibits the openness and decision of his character. It is addressed to the "Officers who sent the remonstrance and protest," and proceeds: —

"Gentlemen,

"I have received both your remonstrance and protest. Had you consulted the dictates of your own reason, those of justice, or the respect due to your commanding officer, I am persuaded such a paper, so highly injurious to your own honour as officers, could never have escaped you.

"You say you were assembled at a council to give your opinion about a matter of property. Pray, Gentlemen, how comes it that a promise of a sum of money from the Nabob, entirely negotiated by me, can be deemed a matter of right and property? So very far from it, it is now in my power to return to the Nabob the money already advanced, and leave it to his option, whether he will perform his promise or not. You have stormed no town, and found the money there; neither did you find it in the plains of Plassey, after the defeat of the Nabob. In short, Gentlemen, it pains me to remind you, that what you are to receive is entirely owing to the care I took of your interest. Had I not interfered greatly in it, you had been left to the

Company's generosity, who perhaps would have thought you sufficiently rewarded, in receiving a present of six months' pay; in return for which, I have been treated with the greatest disrespect and ingratitude, and, what is still worse, you have flown in the face of my authority, for over-ruling an opinion, which, if passed, would have been highly injurious to your own reputation, being attended with injustice to the navy, and been of the worst consequences to the cause of the nation and the Company.

"I shall, therefore, send the money down to Calcutta, give directions to the agents of both parties to have it shroffed; and when the Nabob signifies his pleasure (on whom it solely depends) that the money be paid you, you shall then receive it, and not before.

"Your behaviour has been such, that you cannot expect I should interest myself any further in your concerns. I therefore retract the promise I made the other day, of negotiating either the rest of the Nabob's promise, or the one third which was to be received in the same manner as the rest of the public money, at three yearly equal payments.

"I am, Gentlemen,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed) "Robt. Clive.

"Moorshedabad,
5th July, 1757."

The officers to whom this letter was addressed sent an acknowledgment of their error; to which Clive instantly replied in the following terms: —

" Gentlemen,

" I have ever been desirous of the love and good opinion of my officers, and have often pursued their interest in preference of my own. What passed the other day is now forgotten, and I shall always be glad of an opportunity of convincing you how much

" I am, Gentlemen,

" Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed) " ROBT. CLIVE.

" Moorshedabad,
9th July, 1757."

On the 19th of July Clive wrote to Admiral Watson, — " Since my last letter, the officers of the army, sensible of their error, have thought proper to retract, and all is forgotten on my part."

Admiral Watson in his answer to Clive (of the same date) expressed his gratitude for the part he had taken in favour of the navy; and we find, in a letter from Captain Latham to Clive, dated the 3d of July, an honest proof of Admiral Watson's approbation of his proceedings at this period: — " The Admiral drinks every day," Captain Latham observes, " a bumper to your

health." The amount of the sums to be given, as a donation to the members of the Committee, Council, and others, had not been determined before Meer Jaffier was enthroned. When a settlement was made, Admiral Watson put forth his claim, which was opposed on the grounds of his never having sat in the Committee, or taken any part or responsibility in the plans and operations by which the revolution was effected. When this point was referred to Clive, he denied that Admiral Watson had a specific right, but admitted his claim from his association in the public service, and the zeal and talent with which he had co-operated. On this ground, he proposed that the Admiral's share should be made equal to the Governor's and his own, by a deduction of ten per cent. from each portion of Meer Jaffier's donation, and instantly remitted that deduction from what he had received on this account. His example was followed by a considerable number; but others were more tenacious of what they had obtained; nor were the heirs of the Admiral successful in compelling them by law to this act of liberal justice.

The conduct of the Select Committee before the battle of Plassey had excited Clive's just indignation. "I have received *," he observes,

* Maudipoor, June 26th, 1757.

" a letter from Mr. Drake, in answer to my letter to the Committee, which is very unusual on such important occasions ; and I cannot help thinking, that had the expedition miscarried, you would have laid the whole blame on me."

A subsequent communication * called forth more severe animadversions. " I have received" (he indignantly states) " your letter of the 23d instant †, the contents of which are so indefinite and contradictory, that I can put no other construction upon it than an intent to clear yourself at my expense, had the expedition miscarried. It puts me in mind of the famous answer of the Delphic oracle to Pyrrhus, ' Aio te, Æacide, Romanos vincere posse.' "

But all angry feelings were soon lost in those of joy and triumph. Within a few months the European and native inhabitants of Calcutta had experienced a transition from the most abject state of poverty and misery to one of exaltation and abundance. The cruel author of their wrongs had lost his fortune and his life. The French were, with the exception of a small party, expelled from Bengal; and the Prince, who was raised to the sovereignty of that country,

* Cossimbazar, June 27th, 1757.

† June 23d. The very day on which the battle of Plassey was fought.

owed his crown to the British arms, and must trust to them for his support. For a period, all eyes and all hearts turned with admiration and gratitude to him by whom this great change had been chiefly effected.

But such sentiments are not enduring; and a few years only elapsed before acts, which were approved and applauded at the moment of their occurrence, were brought forward as accusations against the man, to whom his country owed the establishment of her empire in India. It is not, however, intended to anticipate an account of those events which gave rise to this change of feeling in individuals, or public bodies: but I have dwelt thus minutely upon the transactions of this remarkable epoch of Clive's life, and of Indian history, for the purpose of affording materials to determine how far those writers are correct, or justified by facts, who, referring chiefly to documents furnished by his accusers, have censured and condemned many parts of his conduct, both military and political, during this short but memorable expedition.

It has already been shown, that throughout this eventful period the military operations of Clive were subordinate to his political negotiations. But independent of this fact, which placed his conduct as a military officer beyond the common rules of judgment, I confess that I

have little faith in the correctness of that general criticism which refers exclusively to the numbers and quality of the troops engaged, and to the ground upon which the conflict was decided. Even in Europe, where the character of the troops is known, and their fidelity to their banners undoubted, it is much oftener the genius of the commander, exercised during the changing moments of a battle, than the best preconcerted plan, which decides the combat. The mere tactician rests entirely on his plans; if they fail, he is lost: but the eye of an able leader penetrates the mind of his own army and that of the enemy, and by exciting valour to extraordinary efforts, or pressing upon faltering opponents, he snatches a victory which is the more glorious from having been gained contrary to all calculations of art. In India, success in war depends far less upon plans and evolutions than on a correct knowledge of the nature of the enemy's force. The character and composition of the incongruous materials of which eastern armies are formed have already been explained. From some part of this body the most resolute resistance may be expected, from their attachment to their chief. Others, probably from being lukewarm in the cause, and discontented with their leader, require only a pretext to fly. No corps places confidence in, or expects sup-

port from, that which is next to it. The consequence is, that the mere suspicion of treachery, or any misfortune or misconduct in the Prince under whom these bands are for the moment united, dissolves the whole. These facts will account for the frequent defeat of large armies in India by a few disciplined and united men. Yet the armies thus discomfited contain thousands of the same tribes and nations of whom a few hundreds (when attached to their chiefs and loyal to the cause for which they fought) have been found to resist, with the aid of very slight defences, all the efforts of a large and highly disciplined European force.

I have already stated, in the course of this narrative, the successive causes which combined to prevent Clive's return to Madras, after the fall of Chandernagore, and have afforded the reader ample materials to judge this question from the most authentic documents.

To deny to Clive the right of exercising his judgment amid the exigencies of the public service in which he was placed would be to deny him the means of consulting and promoting the interests and honour of his country. When he acted, as he did upon this occasion, against the positive and reiterated orders of the government of Madras, he did so under a deep and alarming responsibility: but in such extreme

cases, the greater the hazard which an individual incurs the greater his merit, if he can establish that the public interests have been promoted by his conduct. The dangers which threatened the English settlements on the coast of Coromandel were great, but they were prospective, and the issue uncertain. The dangers at Bengal, had Clive abandoned the scene, were immediate; and even if we suppose that Calcutta had not been retaken by the resentful Suraj-u-Dowlah, aided by the party of French * who still remained, it was certain that all those impressions and advantages which had been gained by the combined efforts of Admiral Watson and Clive would have been lost, and future armaments required to restore the English in Bengal to that power from which they had fallen, and which was henceforth indispensable to their existence; for from the moment they had been compelled to undertake offensive operations against the native sovereign of the country their reverting to their former condition of merchants was impossible.

* Supposing Bussy neither came to Bengal, as was expected, nor sent any reinforcements to his countrymen, the strength of the party under Law was above two hundred men, and a large proportion of officers. Clive's whole strength of Europeans in September (the earliest time at which the season permitted his sailing to Madras) was only five hundred.

Such was the actual situation of affairs. The penetrating eye of Clive saw, at this moment, the future importance of Bengal; and though fully aware of the dangers that threatened Madras, rested, with a confidence that was not disappointed, upon the able civil and military officers * to whom its affairs were entrusted. He had no such consolatory feelings when he looked to those † on whom the chief authority must devolve at Calcutta; and the details which have been given fully prove the correctness of that judgment which he early formed upon a point so important in the decision of the question.

Orme ascribes Clive's disobedience to his "being convinced that the Nabob would never fulfil the terms of the treaty." The situation of this writer ‡ gave him the completest means of forming a correct judgment; and the events which we have detailed fully prove, that from the day on which Chandernagore fell Clive could at no period have quitted the scene of action without

* Mr. Pigot was governor, and Colonel Lawrence commanded the troops.

† Sufficient evidence of their incompetency appears in this narrative. I refrain from quoting passages in the correspondence before me, in which more serious charges than those of incapacity are stated.

‡ Mr. Orme was, at this period, one of the Council at Madras.

an abandonment of the public interests. The facts already stated will also show that, as long as a hope existed of its practicability, he laboured to effect such a settlement as would enable him to return to Fort St. George.*

The next point on which the character and conduct of Clive have been arraigned, is the treatment of Omichund. The charges which have been brought against him on this ground are of a nature that require a clear understanding of the subject, which I shall endeavour to convey to the reader, that he may form his own opinion upon the whole question.

Omichund, who was a wealthy Hindu merchant, residing at Calcutta, was employed for some period in providing the Company's investment, and at the same time carried on large dealings on his own account; and was much connected, not only with Hindu merchants, but with the ministers of that religion at the court of Moorshedabad. The latter connection led to his occasional employment by the heads of the

* I leave, however, this question to the judgment of my readers, who will also decide on the assertion of Mr. Mill, that "Clive, on beholding an opening for exploits both splendid and profitable in Bengal, overlooked all other considerations, violated his instructions, and remained." This unqualified assertion appears to be a gratuitous assumption of motives of action, in no degree borne out or warranted by the facts of the case.

English factory, as a medium of communication with the ministry of the Nabob of Bengal.

The pre-eminence Omichund obtained, no doubt excited envy; and some of the accusations brought against him might have been fabricated; but a deterioration in the quality, and an increase of the price of the articles furnished by him to the Company, gave sufficient grounds to suspect some dishonest proceedings.

A new system * of providing the investment was adopted, and Omichund lost the profitable employ he had hitherto monopolized. Though fond of display, and maintaining a large establishment of followers, his ruling passion was avarice. The loss he sustained by this change rankled in his mind, and was believed to have rendered him personally hostile to those entrusted with the Company's affairs at Calcutta. He appears, as he withdrew from intercourse with them, to have laboured to strengthen his connexion with the Nabob's court, and to have contracted a particular intimacy with the Rajah Dullub, whose son Kishendass, when he came to reside at Calcutta, was received and treated by Omichund with kindness and hospitality.

Siraj-u-Dowlah had endeavoured to persuade

* In 1753 gomastahs (or agents) were sent to several parts of the country, where the cloths for the Company's investment were manufactured.

his predecessor, Aliverdi Khan, that the English were plotting against him, and giving protection to his subjects. The moment he succeeded to the throne, he demanded that Kishendass should be delivered up; but the extraordinary mode in which this demand was made, through a man * who came clandestinely to Calcutta, and went first to Omichund's house, gave rise to a belief that this communication was part of an intrigue to re-establish the importance of the latter person. With such impressions, and having intercepted, after the commencement of hostilities, a letter from Ram Bam Sing (the Nabob's head spy) to Omichund, advising him to remove his effects from Calcutta, it is not surprising that the Committee should have suspected their former contractor to be one of the principal instigators of the attack with which the English settlement was threatened. A conviction of this fact led to his being seized, and imprisoned in the fort. His guest Kishendass, and his brother-in-law † Hazarimul, were also

* The name of this messenger was Narrayndass. He was brother to the Nabob's head spy.

† Orme, from whom we have taken the above facts, adds, "His (Omichund's) brother-in-law, Hazarimul, who had the chief management of his affairs, concealed himself in the apartments of the women until the next day, when the guard, endeavouring to take him, was resisted by the whole body of Omichund's peons and armed domestics, amounting

made prisoners: the search after the latter was attended with circumstances of violence, which led to the death of several of Omichund's family.

When Calcutta was taken, Omichund and Kishendass were released, and treated with civility by the Nabob; a circumstance which confirmed some in the belief of their treachery: but, as the former lost money and property to an amount of four lacs of rupees, it is sufficiently obvious that, though he might have stimulated the Nabob's anger against the English, he never could have desired results which involved his own ruin. But it is a common fate of such intriguers to raise the storm they cannot control, and by whose fury they themselves are overwhelmed.

The dismissal of Omichund from his employ as contractor for the investment, his imprisonment, and the cruel fate of part of his family, were circumstances calculated to have separated him for ever from any connection with the En-

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to three hundred. Several were wounded on both sides before the fray ended; during which the head of the peons, who was an Indian of high caste, set fire to the house; and, in order to save the women of the family from the dishonour of being exposed to strangers, entered their apartments and killed, it is said, thirteen of them with his own hand, after which he stabbed himself, but, contrary to his intention, not mortally."

glish: but all feelings and passions in his mind were absorbed by the desire of gain. To that object his abilities, which were considerable, were invariably and unceasingly directed. He had established himself, after Calcutta was taken, at the Nabob's court; first ingratiating himself with the favourite of that prince, Mohun Lal; and afterwards with Suraj-u-Dowlah himself. When Clive came to Calcutta, Omichund was the ready medium to aid in promoting peace, and had so far established himself in favour, that Mr. Watts, when he went to Moorshedabad, was permitted to employ him in his negotiations.

The object of Omichund was to stand so well with both parties as to make his profit of each, on the ground of his real or reputed influence with the other. There can be no doubt, from his character and the scenes in which he was employed, that he had recovered a great part of his losses before he prevailed upon the Nabob to direct, not only the restoration of his property, but the payment of four * lacs of rupees that had been plundered from his house at Calcutta. Suraj-u-Dowlah also gave him an order,

* Omichund received, upon the spot, one half of this amount: the date of the payment of the remainder was deferred, and it was probably to gain time to recover this sum, that he created those delays in the proceedings of the confederates, of which Mr. Watts accused him.

commanding the Rajah of Purneah * to pay him a debt he had long owed him of four lacs and fifty thousand rupees.

Omichund, as has been shown, became an active agent in forming the confederacy against Suraj-u-Dowlah; and when possessed of the secrets of the different parties concerned, he threatened to reveal the whole plot, unless an article was introduced into the treaty, stipulating that he should receive thirty lacs of rupees on the enthronement of Meer Jaffier.

The enormity of this demand, great as it was, appears to have been viewed as a slight consideration in comparison to that of the time and manner in which it was made. It was the companion of the road watching his opportunity, and turning upon his fellow-traveller to threaten him with instant destruction unless he complied with all his demands. Few have endeavoured to excuse, or even to extenuate, the deep and daring guilt of Omichund; but many have questioned the fitness of the mode that was adopted to disappoint his avarice, and at the same time to avert the consequences of his threatened treachery.

Deceitful professions, promises, and engagements, which are adopted at a particular crisis to lull suspicion for the moment, can never be

* Purneah is a province of Bengal.

defended but in those extreme cases where, after confidence has been established, the violation of faith by one party enables him to take such advantage of the other as gives the latter no alternative except a counterplot, or submission to fraud and injustice. In such a case, the most scrupulous would find an excuse for the retaliation of deceit, provided it could be proved to be the only means of placing the parties on the footing upon which they stood before the aggressor broke faith, and, abusing the confidence placed in him, demanded terms of unreasonable and extravagant advantage. This appears to be the exact position in which Omichund stood. After vicissitudes of favour and disgrace, he had been restored to confidential employment, from which he had already derived great advantages. He must have been certain, had he continued faithful and honest, not only of recovering his losses, but of being liberally rewarded. Every consideration, however, of duty and of interest, gave way before a prospect of acquiring, by one well-timed and daring act of perfidy, great and sudden riches. "Secure to me, under a sealed treaty, thirty lacs of rupees, or I will this night inform the Nabob of your plot for his dethronement, and have you all put to death," was the direct emphatic meaning, if not exact words, of his speech to Mr. Watts. This is proved by

three short notes written by that gentleman on the day the communication was made; by Clive's letters written the moment he learned what had passed; by the evidence of Mr. Sykes; and by the expedient which it was thought necessary to adopt, to disappoint his avarice and to guard against his treachery. Orme, describing the conduct of Omichund on this occasion, observes *, "Grounded on his importance by knowing the secret, he held out the terror of betraying it to secure his own advantages. Whether he would have betrayed it is uncertain; for part of his fortune was in the power of the English, and he had the utmost vengeance of Jaffier and his confederates to fear. However, the experiment was not to be tried." The same author adds, "But, on the other hand, as his tales and artifices prevented Suraj-u-Dowlah from believing the representations of his most trusty servants, who early suspected, and at length were convinced, that the English were confederated with Jaffier, the twenty lacs of rupees he expected should have been paid to him, and he left to employ them in oblivion and contempt."

It was not twenty lacs of rupees, but thirty, that Omichund expected; for he was promised five per cent. upon the whole amount, inde-

* Orme, vol. ii. p. 182.

pendent of what was specified in the fictitious treaty. He had stipulated with a sword, or rather a dagger, in his hand, that he should receive this great sum, though his unpaid losses did not exceed two lacs. The distinct ground upon which he demanded the remainder was, his power to extort it: the very extent of the sum proved the extortion. If he had succeeded in his object, this subordinate agent would have received much more than double the amount of the sum fixed to be divided between the Governor, Military Commander, Select Committee, and Members of Council; and his share of the Nabob's donations would have been equal to two thirds of what had been stipulated as the reward of the services of the whole army and navy.

There is another view of this question to be taken, to which the circumstances of the moment gave great importance. The recently established influence and power of the English, compelled them to confide their public, as well as private, concerns, to native associates and agents: and, with reference to the ruling passions of the Hindus, we may affirm, that an example more likely to be detrimental to their future interests could not have occurred than a successful issue of the treachery of Omichund.

These considerations, however, relate only to the policy or impolicy of complying with his

demand. We have now to examine the mode that was adopted to defeat its object; and here, it must be admitted, that of all modes by which his machinations could be defeated, a fictitious treaty appears the most seriously objectionable; but the alternative of complying with his demand, or of framing such a treaty, was forced upon the Committee of Calcutta. Omichund demanded that document as the condition of refraining from his threatened communication to the Nabob. No verbal promise could satisfy a person who was conscious of having broken every tie with those by whom he had been trusted. He demanded, therefore, what he thought the most sacred of all pledges that could be given; and it was obvious, that they must either comply with his request, deceive him with a false treaty, or vitiate the real one by the insertion of an article not meant to be performed.

It is here to be remarked, that Omichund was no party to the treaty. That treaty was contracted between the Committee at Calcutta and Meer Jaffier; and both these parties were agreeing to the fictitious treaty, which was prepared for the sole purpose of being shown to Omichund, to lull him into security till the hour of danger from his hostility was past. This distinction is important: for, though it does not

clear the parties concerned of deliberate deceit towards an individual, it removes all imputation of their having brought a stain on the good faith of the State, by the substitution, to the party with whom they treated, of a false for a real engagement.

Clive was the person who proposed the expedient of a fictitious treaty; and his sentiments were unanimously adopted by the Committee.

Admiral Watson, it is stated, refused to sign this engagement; but it is at the same time affirmed, and apparently on undoubted testimony, that he offered no objection to the signature of his name* by another person. The Admiral had withheld himself from taking any active part in the scenes at Moorshedabad; and, in the proceeding towards Omichund, he probably conceived that he was not called upon, by that sense of necessity that influenced others, to lend his name to an act which must have been

* Lord Clive's evidence goes to prove, that Admiral Watson did not object to his name being put by Mr. Lushington to the fictitious treaty; and his knowledge of the transaction, at the period it occurred, is established by the direct testimony of Mr. Cooke, Secretary to Government, who stated, "That, after the battle of Plassey, he waited upon Admiral Watson with a message from the Select Committee: that, among other things, the fictitious treaty was mentioned in conversation; and that the Admiral said he had not signed it, but left them to do as they pleased."—*Parliamentary Reports*, vol. iii. p. 152.

repugnant to the feelings even of those who deemed themselves compelled by duty to have recourse to such an artifice.

Orme, speaking of the difference which arose between Mr. Watts and Omichund, after explaining the grounds upon which he supposes the latter to have acted, observes, that if his demand had been realised, it would have been 650,000*l.* "The audacity of the pretension," he adds, "implied malignant art; but it is said he threatened to reveal the conspiracy to the Nabob, if not complied with. If so, the boldest iniquity could not have gone further."

I have already shown, that Omichund did threaten to inform the Nabob. Indeed, nothing but a conviction of his resolution to take that step unless his avarice was gratified, could possibly have called for the extreme measure which was adopted. The author already quoted gives a pathetic account of the effect which the communication of the deception had upon Omichund. He was, Mr. Orme states, overwhelmed by it at the moment, fainted on the spot, was carried home, evinced symptoms of a disturbed reason *,

* One month after Omichund was informed of the fictitious treaty, Clive, in a letter to the Committee at Calcutta, requests their support to enable Omichund to perform his contract for the supply of saltpetre at Patna: and in a subsequent letter (dated August 6th, 1757) to the Secret Com-

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and subsequently went upon a pilgrimage to a holy Hindu shrine near Maulda, whence he returned in a state of idiotism, from which he never recovered.

The story of the termination of Omichund's life is affecting, and must make an impression upon every well-constituted mind. We view with pity the effects which the sudden dissolution of his golden dreams had upon this wretched, though wealthy Hindu; but we cannot allow the feelings in which we indulge to subdue our judgment. While we give a tear to weak and suffering humanity, we must do justice to those who deemed themselves compelled by circumstances, and by the situation in which they were placed, to repress all private feeling, and even to incur obloquy, in the performance of their public duty. With such sentiments I cannot, like Mr. Mill *, proclaim my sympathy and regret for this martyr to avarice; and stamp, with the term of "consummate treachery †," the ex-

mittee of the Directors, after stating that he had recommended Omichund to pay a visit of devotion to Maulda, he adds, "He is a person capable of rendering you great services, therefore not wholly to be discarded." These notices of this man do not imply that his reason was, at this period, so much affected as might be concluded from the perusal of Orme's narrative.

* History of India, vol. iii. p. 170.

† An author for whom I entertain sincere respect, and with whose sentiments my own, in most points, coincide,

pedient by which his exorbitant demands and wicked designs were disappointed and frustrated; far less can I admit the truth of the historian's remark, "That Clive was a person to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never gave a pang." This general and sweeping assertion, far from being supported by any facts that have come to my knowledge *, is contradicted by every evidence we possess, and is altogether contrary to the general character of his open and manly, but sensitive mind. I do not pretend to look into the hearts of men, and to pronounce dogmatically upon their inmost thoughts and feelings; but, in admitting that

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startled at the means taken to deceive Omichund, expresses an opinion, "That the principles of honour and integrity should have prescribed a more open conduct, even at somewhat greater expense of danger." — Grant's Sketches of India, p. 162. We should quite agree in this opinion, if the danger was personal to the individuals; but when it was that of the State, we should find it as difficult to point out the exact line of demarcation to be observed by men entrusted with its interests, as to define what should be the conduct of a lawyer in a particular case, where his personal feelings and general principles of action were in opposition to his duty to his client and [illegible] professional reputation.

* I received from Lord Powis several trunks full of his father's papers unexamined by himself. In these were documents of every description, from copies of all his despatches, to the most private notes: and I have not discovered one line that can justify the sweeping assertion of Mr. Mill.

Clive, in the extraordinary situation in which he was placed, resisted art by art, and counteracted the treachery of the enemies of the Government he served, by deceiving them, I am satisfied, from all his own statements, as well as from those of others, that he had recourse to such an expedient only because he considered himself to be called upon to employ it, by the duty he owed to his country. He may, like other men, have erred, both in his objects and in the mode of their accomplishment; but I deem the whole history of his life, and, above all, the unbounded confidence we find placed in him, both by the natives of India and by his own countrymen, to be altogether incompatible with the truth of the charge, that he was a man "to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never gave a pang."

The wealth Clive acquired by the revolution which placed Meer Jaffier upon the throne, excited envy at the moment, and became afterwards a subject of reproach, and even of accusation; I shall, therefore, offer a few observations upon the subject.

I have elsewhere* adverted to this point, and shown that Clive, in accordance with the usages of the Company's service in India, at that pe-

* Pol. India, vol. ii.

rich, received presents, as Commander in Chief, to a very large amount. His acceptance of this reward (as it was termed) of his labours and success, was open and avowed; and, though subsequently made the subject of a charge against him, we do not find that at the time any one arraigned, either the amount of the donation, or the principle of receiving it. The fact is, that at that epoch of our Indian government, the public officers of the Company had very limited salaries: their perquisites and advantages, when employed on civil, military, or political stations, appear to have been such as had been enjoyed by native functionaries, performing the duties to which they, in times of conquest and revolution, had succeeded. These, on ordinary occasions, were derived from a per centage on particular branches of revenue, privileges of trade, or presents from inferiors, and were always considerable; but when such events occurred as negotiating a peace *, or replacing a

* A remarkable instance of this mode of paying those concerned in such important transactions, is afforded in the treaty of peace with Tippoo Sultaun, concluded by Lord Cornwallis in 1792. Thirty lacs of rupees were demanded, and given as *Durbar khurutch* (or Durbar expenses), avowedly to be distributed amongst the officers concerned in settling the treaty. Lord Cornwallis, it may be observed, obtained no share of this money: but it may be answered, that while a commander, in Lord Clive's situation, had not

monarch upon a throne, the money, gifts, and territorial grants to the chief instruments of such changes, were limited only by the moderation of one party and the ability of the other.

Public servants *, in receiving, instead of a regulated salary, the fees and profits which had been enjoyed by the natives to whose offices they had succeeded in newly-acquired territories, only followed the usage of the country; and they were sanctioned in it by their own Government. It suited the character of the Indian administration in England, and was altogether adapted to that of our first rule in India. That it was loose, undefined, and liable to great abuses, is admitted. The evils of such a system became manifest, and were remedied; but assuredly, while it continued, the public servant, who drew his emoluments from open and recognised sources, was no more blamable than some of the first men in England, who hold offices that continue to be paid by fees or fines, in the manner established by their ancestors.

3000*l.* per annum of direct salary, and could have no expectation of pecuniary reward in England, Lord Cornwallis had 30,000*l.* per annum, besides a donation of 100,000*l.* from the Government he so ably served; which, with a liberal wisdom that does it honour, after that nobleman's death gave 60,000*l.* to his son and successor.

* Political India, vol. ii. p. 188.

Clive, independent of the share of the donation to the Select Committee, of which he was a member, was offered a present of sixteen lacs of rupees * by Meer Jaffier, after he had placed that prince on the throne; and he took it, as a boon which he deemed himself fully warranted in accepting. He acquired, on this occasion, as he stated, great wealth; but its acquisition injured no interests either of individuals or of the state he served; and did not, in the slightest degree, compromise the obligations of public duty; for the gift was unsolicited, free, and unconditional.

Of the sense Clive entertained of this transaction we have the best proof, not only in his private, but in his official letters, in which he announced this sudden and surprising influx of riches. In his letter, under date the 20th of August, 1757, to Mr. Mabbot, one of the principal Directors, after giving an account of the revolution he had effected, he adds, "I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that the greatest success at Golconda could not have equalled the present one for advantages, either to the Company or myself." — "Indeed," he concludes, "there is nothing but the good of the service can induce me to stay in this unhealthy climate." In all his letters to his attorneys, to his friends

* 180,000*l.*

and relatives, we find the amount of this donation represented as great; and he distinctly states in one letter, that he had no desire whatever to conceal the Nabob's liberality, which he thought was as honourable to that prince as to himself. There is, however, no document which more fully establishes the character of this donation, and the view that he took of it, than his letter to Mr. Payne, of the 25th of December, 1757. After alluding to the envy which his good fortune had excited, he observes, "The Nabob, of his own free will, for the service rendered him, made me a present much beyond my expectations; part of which I bestowed on those immediately about me, and one or two of the principal officers. I never made the least secret of this affair, but always thought the world ought to be acquainted with the Nabob's generosity. If I had been disposed to grow rich by receiving presents from any other hands but those of the Nabob, surely no one had ever the like opportunity; but there is not that man living, among the daily temptations which offered, who can accuse me of receiving any thing of value but from the Nabob himself. I have troubled you with these particulars," he concludes, "because among some it may be considered as a crime my being rich. If it be a crime,

you, Sir, are truly acquainted with the nature of it."

The Court of Directors, in their letter to the Select Committee at Bengal, dated the 8th of March, 1758, fully recognise the usage upon which presents were at that period given and received by their public servants. After stating their decision that the surplus of the sums received, after the reimbursement of losses, should be deposited in the Company's treasury, they add, "We do not intend, by this, to break in upon any sums of money which have been given by the Nabob to particular persons, by way of free gift, or in reward of their services." In the subsequent changes in the Direction, a more hostile spirit arose against Clive; and, among other accusations, one grounded on his acquisition of wealth by this present, and by the subsequent grant of a jaghire (or estate), was brought forward. To this charge we find an animated reply in his well-known letter to the Court of Proprietors. "The Nabob, then," Clive writes, "agreeable to the known and usual custom of Eastern princes, made presents, both to those of his own court, and to such of the English who, by their rank and abilities, had been instrumental in the happy success of so hazardous an enterprise, suitable to the rank and dignity of a great prince. I was one, amongst the many, who benefited by his

favour. I never sought to conceal it; but declared publicly, in my letter to the Secret Committee of the India Directors, that the Nabob's generosity had made my fortune easy, and the Company's welfare was now my only motive for staying in India. What injustice was this to the Company? They could expect no more than what was stipulated in the treaty. Or, what injunction was I under to refuse a present from him, who had the power to make me one, as the reward of honourable services? I know of none. I had surely, myself, a particular claim, by having devoted myself to the Company's military service, and neglected all commercial advantages. What reason can then be given, or what pretence could the Company have to expect, that I, after having risked my life so often in their service, should deny myself the only honourable opportunity that ever offered of acquiring a fortune without prejudice to them, who, it is evident, could not have had more for my having less? When the Company had acquired 1,500,000*l.* sterling, and a revenue of near 100,000*l.* per annum, from the success of their forces under my command, — when ample restoration had been made to those whose fortunes suffered by the calamity of Calcutta, — and when individuals had, in consequence of that success, acquired large estates, — what would the

world have said, had I come home and rested upon the generosity of the present Court of Directors? It is well known to every gentleman in Bengal, that the honour of my country and the interest of the Company were the principles that governed all my actions; and that had I only taken the advantageous opportunities that presented themselves, by my being Commander-in-chief, at the head of a victorious army, and what by the custom of that country I was entitled to, the jaghire itself, great as it is, would have been an object scarce worthy my consideration. The city of Moorshedabad is as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London; with this difference, that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than any in the last city. These, as well as every other man of property, made me the greatest offers, (which, nevertheless, are usual upon such occasions, and what they expected would have been required,) and had I accepted these offers I might have been in possession of millions, of which the present Court of Directors could not have dispossessed me; but preferring the reputation of the English nation, the interest of the Nabob, and the advantage of the Company, to all pecuniary considerations, I refused all offers that were made me, not only then, but to the last hour of my continuance in

the Company's service in Bengal; and do challenge friend or enemy to bring one single instance of my being influenced by interested motives to the Company's disadvantage; or to do any act that could reflect dishonour on my country or the Company in any one action of my administration, either as governor or commanding officer."

That Clive was far from being influenced by sordid motives was never more clearly proved than during the period of which this chapter treats. While it was yet thought a settlement might be effected with Suraj-u-Dowlah, an offer had been made to pay the amount of 3500*l.*, which he had personally lost at the capture of Calcutta. His reply to this communication was short, but conclusive: "Pray think no more of my losses," he states in a letter to Mr. Scrafton; "I would not be thought mercenary or selfish for the world."

His liberal behaviour toward Admiral Watson has been noticed. On this occasion, and on several others *, he chose rather to diminish the amount of his own portion than allow further demands upon the Nabob. Of his great gene-

* It appears from his papers and accounts that he gave away large sums, not only to those who had personal claims upon him, but to others whose merit, as public servants, had not, he thought, been sufficiently rewarded.

rosity to his family and friends I shall speak hereafter. Those who desire to detract from his title to praise for such conduct, on the ground of his wealth, are little acquainted with the effect that riches usually have upon men possessing less liberal minds; in whom they oftener generate a spirit of cupidity than a desire, such as Clive felt, to dispense to others the relief and blessings they can afford.

I have it in my power to add a remarkable testimony to show the circumstances under which Clive acted upon the occasion to which I have alluded.

A highly respectable gentleman, long resident in Suffolk, who had filled official stations in India, a few years ago addressed a letter to the present Lord Powis; in which, after stating facts that will be hereafter noticed, he informs his Lordship that it being known he was on personal grounds discontented with his father, he was summoned, in 1773, as an evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons who investigated the charges against him: "I of course attended," he observes, "but was far from being inimically disposed to his Lordship; and never can I forget what passed at the Committee on that day. Governor Johnstone, after some deliberation, suddenly rose, and with apparent exultation observed, 'It was now suffi-

ciently proved on the proceedings, that his Lordship had received upwards of 100,000*l.* soon after the battle of Plassey;' when Lord Clive, rising from his seat, calmly replied, that 'If any gentleman of the Committee had privately asked him if that charge was true, he should have frankly acknowledged to him that he had received a much larger sum;' adding, 'but when I recollect entering the Nabob's treasury at Moorshedabad, with heaps of gold and silver to the right and left, and these crowned with jewels,' striking his hand violently on his head, 'by God, at this moment, do I stand astonished at my own moderation.'"

A guilty mind seeks concealment. Such, evidently, was not the object of Clive on this or any other occasion of his life; and those, even, who condemn his actions, must acknowledge that they were grounded upon a complete conviction in his own mind that they were not only defensible, but consistent with his principles of honour as a gentleman, and with those of his duty as a public servant.

I have, in this chapter, stated, with much freedom, my difference of opinion from Mr. Mill, on some points connected with the revolution at Moorshedabad; I have great pleasure, however, in referring to his subsequent general remarks on this subject.

The chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1773, when he brought up its report, made a motion, that the House should inquire into the circumstances of the death and deposition of Suraj-u-Dowlah, the fictitious treaty, and other matters which took place on the elevation of Meer Jaffier. This was rejected, on the plea of the reports of the Committee not being evidence. Mr. Mill deems this ground of rejection a "subterfuge of the nature of a legal shuffle:"—"but there were other considerations," he states, "to which the House never adverted, which fairly recommended the rejection, or at least a very great modification, of the penal proceeding; that the punishment threatened was more grievous than the offence; that it was punishment by an *ex-post-facto* law, because, however contrary to the principles of right government the presents received from Meer Jaffier, and however odious to the moral sense the deception practised upon Omichund, there was no law at the time which forbid them; that the presents, how contrary soever to European morals and ideas, were perfectly correspondent to those of the country in which they were received, and to the expectations of the parties by whom they were bestowed; that the treachery to Omichund was countenanced and palliated by some of the principles and many of the admired

incidents of European diplomacy; that Clive, though never inattentive to his own interests, was actuated by a sincere desire to promote the prosperity of the Company, and appears not, in any instance, to have sacrificed what he regarded as their interests to his own; and that it would have required an extraordinary man, which no one ought to be punished for not being, to have acted, in that most trying situation in which he was placed, with greater disinterestedness than he displayed." *

* Mill's History of British India, vol. iii. p. 454.

CHAP. VII.

From causes which we have already been repeatedly called upon to observe, — the unity of action of Europeans, and the want of it in their Indian enemies, — the most extraordinary advantages have often been gained by apparently the most inadequate means. The work of force is easy; violence and strength can cast down, but wisdom alone can rebuild. This task is always far more difficult than the first, especially when the materials of which the new fabric is to be constructed must be taken from the ruins of the old. These are, in such cases, too often impaired and rendered unfit for use by the previous shock they have sustained.

Clive soon found the truth of these facts. Meer Jaffier had no qualities but as a soldier: his son was a headstrong youth; and his brother, whom he wished to employ, was weak and incompetent. These, and the Nabob's other relations and Mahommedan adherents, were alike desirous of removing and plundering the wealthy and experienced Hindus who were at the head of the administration, and governed the richest provinces of Bengal. Roy Dullub, who saw

that his ruin was their object, had fenced himself round with his followers, and withdrawn from all personal communication with the Nabob. Addul Sing, the Rajah of Purneah, Rajah Ram, the Manager of Midnapore, and Rajah Ram Narrain, the Ruler of Patna, were within a few months driven to rebellion by acts of violence, which too plainly indicated that successful opposition was their only road to safety. The defection of Ram Narrain, at this period, was more unfortunate, as it afforded a safe progress towards Oude to the French party under Law, in pursuit of whom a detachment had marched, commanded by Major Coote.

The events which led to this general spirit of rebellion, took place while Clive was at Calcutta, whither he had been called by urgent public and private concerns. His first melancholy duty after his arrival was to attend the funeral of his brave associate Admiral Watson. That gallant officer was seized, on the 12th of August, with a putrid fever, which terminated his existence in four days. No man appears to have felt more deeply than Clive the loss which was sustained by this event. In a letter to the Committee of the Direction, written immediately subsequent to its occurrence, he observes: —

"Mr. Watson is no more. Every one here received the melancholy news of his death with

much concern: his generosity, disinterestedness, and zeal for the service, must for ever endear his memory to the Company. Unhappy fate! after having escaped all the risk of war, to be thus untimely cut off in the midst of his successes, crowned with glory and reputation. This is but one of the many lessons given us of the instability of human nature. Concern for this good man's death hastens me to a conclusion."

It appears from Clive's letter* to the Court of Directors from Calcutta, that he still cherished a hope that he might be able to return to Madras when the season admitted. "Your Honours may be persuaded," he observes, "that next to this province, the Carnatic takes up the whole of my attention. It gives me much concern the gentlemen on the coast should be displeased at my not returning a part of the forces: had I done so, nothing could have been effected here. Your Honours, who bestow an impartial attention upon all the Company's settlements, will, I hope, approve of my conduct. The time draws near when we may expect to hear of the new Soubah, Meer Jaffier's confirmation from Delhi, and that the Mahrattas are satisfied with the present change. I shall then proceed to the Carnatic with a force which, I hope, will give

* 22d August, 1757.

our arms the superiority in those parts. I make no doubt of being there soon after the breaking up of the monsoon, which will be as early as the two contending parties can take the field; and upon my arrival there I shall with pleasure resign the sword to my superiors."

During the period Clive was at Calcutta he was much occupied in settling the distribution of the sums allotted for the remuneration of losses, and the donation to the army and navy. The former appears to have been arranged on the justest principles, and to have given universal satisfaction, but the discussions regarding the latter, though they had been once settled, were revived, and took a more acrimonious shape; and it was not till after much trouble and vexation that they were ultimately adjusted.*

* By Clive's letter to Colonel Adlercron (dated 27th September) it appears that some of the officers had resisted his endeavours to make an arrangement that should put an end to the discontents which had arisen from the share of a private soldier being less than that of a seaman. Clive, to effect this purpose, was willing to make a considerable deduction from his own share. Major Kilpatrick, and several other officers of rank, cheerfully concurred in this object, but it was violently opposed by others; and Captain Armstrong, who commanded at Calcutta, refused to publish Clive's order upon the subject. He was brought to a court-martial, but acquitted. Clive refused to approve the sentence; and concluded his letter to Colonel Adlercron with the following just observations on the subversion of the principles of dis-

Clive, after having settled these disputes, found himself compelled to make preparations to accompany the Nabob to Patna; for, independent of the three rebellions before alluded to, Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Vizier of Oude, now threatened the frontier. This Prince, who held (like the Nabob of Bengal) a delegated power from the Emperor of Delhi, had become, like others, independent of the weak superior to whom he continued to give a nominal obedience. His territories, bounded on the west by the river Jumna, and on the east by the mountains of Nepaul, stretched to near Delhi on the north, and on the south bordered on Bahar, one of the richest provinces subject to the rule of Meer Jaffier. Sujah-u-Dowlah was to be dreaded both from his character and resources: he had, besides,

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cipline by Captain Armstrong's conduct: — "You, Sir, will be the best judge whether setting aside my order, by any indirect and underhand methods, to serve a self-interested view; whether assembling the officers together without a proper authority, and even disputing the rank of the officers given by me, especially in the case of Lieutenant Corneille, be consistent with the duty and obedience which is due to the commanding officer; and I cannot help thinking it was the duty of Captain Armstrong to have given out my orders, when ordered to do so by the Governor, even if he thought them unjust: for if officers are allowed to disobey the orders of their superiors (unless in cases of an extraordinary nature) there must be an end to all discipline and subordination. If I took upon me to act wrong, justice was open to them by complaining to you, Sir, or any of my superiors."

the aid of the French party, and was believed to have established the ties of friendship with Ram Narrain, the discontented ruler of the country he was expected to invade.

Clive's force was at this period greatly reduced from sickness: he could not bring into the field more than five hundred and fifty Europeans, and fifteen hundred natives. He complains, in all his letters, of the bad effects the prize-money had produced, both on the health and discipline of those under his command. He had applied for, and obtained leave of the Admiral, Sir George Pocock, to employ the detachment of His Majesty's troops in Bengal; but the conduct of the officers (with two exceptions) made him decline accepting their unwilling services.

"Notwithstanding your offer," he observes in his reply * to the Admiral, "of putting the King's detachment under my command on this expedition, I am sorry to inform you I cannot accept it, without prejudicing the service; for all the officers (Captain Weller † and Captain Coote

* 16th November, 1757.

† Clive found himself compelled to decline the offer of Captain Weller, in terms which, although they disappointed his forward zeal, must have gratified him. His employment, distinct from his corps, would, in effect, have superseded several officers in the Company's service, whom it would naturally have rendered discontented.

excepted) have expressed by letter a disinclination to go upon it. Under these circumstances, I think it is better for the Company to be served by those who are willing, and may be attached to their service, than by persons who seem to have lost all remembrance of what they owe to them! For my own part, though I have before represented to you the many disadvantages I must labour under, during the present expedition, I shall endeavour to surmount them, and be ready to render the Company all the service, which every wellwisher to his country is bound to do."

The rising talents of Major Coote were already employed in the command of a detachment. The death of Major Kilpatrick, an officer who had been highly distinguished throughout the scenes above described, occasioning a vacancy in the command of the military at Bengal, Clive recommended that the station should be offered to Colonel Forde*, an officer of whom he entertained the highest opinion. The terms, in which this offer was conveyed, are honourable to the reputation of him to whom it was made, and reflect great credit on Clive's discernment; for no opportunities had been yet afforded to Colonel Forde of developing those talents as a soldier, which soon

* This officer belonged to Col. Adlercron's regiment.

afterwards rendered him so distinguished. Notwithstanding the encouragement offered, from the distinction obtained by Coote and Forde, when Adlercron's regiment went to England a short time after, none of the other officers belonging to it availed themselves of the option given them, of remaining in the Company's service, except Captain Carnac, who joined Clive, by whom he was early noticed; and his subsequent career in Bengal did ample credit to the judgment of his penetrating commander.

I have deemed it of importance to dwell on these particulars. In nothing does the power of genius more strikingly display itself than in the selection of persons most fit to be employed, and in the application of their peculiar talents to the work for which they are suited. The personal efforts of one man can do little; but aided by the power of creating and employing subordinate instruments, can effect every thing. The sphere of Clive's selection, however, was very limited; and there are, in his private letters of this period, continual complaints of his being forced, from want of aid, to make personal efforts injurious to his health*, which had never

* In a letter, under date the 2d of August, 1757, to his friend Mr. Pigot, he observes, "If I was to consult my own interests only, every thing conspires to make me desirous of leaving this province. An unhealthy climate, a bad consti-

been good, and which he now represents as declining from the effects of a nervous complaint, to which he had been subject from his youth.

Affairs at Moorshedabad had, from the moment Clive left that city, become worse. Besides other evils, the Nabob had hitherto evaded compliance with several of the most important articles of the treaty; and he every day showed less disposition to comply with the reiterated demands made for its speedy fulfilment. Mr. Scrafton, who was at this period acting as political resident at his Court, urged Clive to hasten to Moorshedabad, with or without his force; as his presence appeared the only means of averting confusion and ruin.

"I shall march," said Clive, in answer* to several of Mr. Scrafton's letters †, "with the

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tution, a genteel competence, a possible reverse of fortune, are strong motives to have done so; but a superior consideration to all these obliges me to continue some time longer."

* 6th November, 1757.

† The letters from Mr. Scrafton, at this period, convey a vivid picture of the state both of Meer Jaffier's mind and his own. In his letter of the 3d November, in which he reports a visit to the durbar, he describes the Nabob as looking very grim when he approached. For half an hour he took no notice of him, but abused every one present; then turning quickly round, he said to Scrafton, "What have you to say to me?"—"What! here, Sir?" Scrafton replied. —"We will go there," said the Nabob, pointing to a small room. Mr. Scrafton, ashamed of this proceeding, tried to

whole army. I have wrote to the Nabob and Ram Narrain, of which copies are enclosed you. Do not suffer yourself to be unquieted beyond

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change the subject by saying, "Have you written for the Colonel?"—"Yes, with his whole army, to be sure."—"Do you know the expense?"—"Will a lac per month do? But I shall not settle with you; when Sabut Jung comes, I will talk with him about it." Mr. Scrafton, after commenting upon the passion displayed by the Nabob on this occasion, and representing the danger of rebellion from his violent conduct, concludes by entreating Clive to hasten to Moorshedabad, leaving his army to follow. "We are lost," he says, "if we do not act as principals." In two letters written subsequently, Mr. Scrafton gives a further account of the Nabob's distraction, irritation, and alarm at the treachery and rebellion with which he is surrounded. In his communication to Clive, of the 7th November, he states, "I hope you are set out. Our honour, our interests, and our reputation, are all at stake." He closes this letter in the following words:—"The Nabob pitched his tent in the garden yesterday, and had about two hundred men with him. Not an officer has joined him yet with any forces; nor will they till Roy Dullub marches. His son is absolutely ill with grief and shame, and goes no more near his father. Sir, I can only say, if you don't set out, with or without troops, permit me to go to Calcutta. I can't carry that authority, that sway, which the Company's affairs require; and will not stay on the terms I am now with the Nabob. I clearly comprehend the political disease of the Nabob's affairs, but it is you only that can apply the remedy. I was an hour alone with Roy Dullub: I see all their schemes, and what all these seeds of division will inevitably produce. I conclude with this sentence; that if Sujah-u-Dowlah joins Ram Narrain, adieu to the Nabob and the remainder of the treaty, for he certainly carries Bengal."

reason at the situation of affairs, but consider them coolly, and give me daily accounts of what is passing. The march of the army is absolutely necessary, as well to support the Nabob against his enemies, as to see justice done ourselves."

After Clive had joined the Nabob at Rajahmahul, he received a letter from the Select Committee, stating that as Sir G. Pocock was about to leave the river, were he to proceed to Patna the safety of Calcutta might be endangered. Clive observes in reply; "Without a foreknowledge of events, we cannot be at any certainty, whether the steps we take may or may not be for the advantage of the Company. By accompanying the Nabob to Patna, it is very possible, though I think not probable, for a French squadron to push up the river, and endanger Calcutta, and in consequence all of the Company's possessions in these parts; and by refusing to lend the Nabob our assistance, we must lose that influence with him which seems essentially necessary to obtain his fulfilling the rest of the treaty, and his continuing to us our valuable possessions.

"Yesterday the Nabob and his minister paid me a visit. After discoursing for some time on the promising prospect of his affairs, he desired I would march with him to Patna. This I consented to, on condition he gave us security for

paying the rest of his debts. The orders upon Burdwaun, Nuddea, Hooghley, and Fugellie are making out, which I hope to send you in a day or two: I have reason to think you will receive in ready money the full of the half-year's payment. As Ram Narrain * refuses to trust his person in the Nabob's power without a letter from me, I have wrote him that he may come with safety, having the Nabob's authority for so doing, and I am in great hopes there will be no necessity for marching further than Telliagully. If the affairs of Patna can be settled in this manner, it will save the Nabob an expense which he is not well able to bear, and ease you of all apprehensions from the arrival of a French squadron."

In Clive's letter † from Rajah-mahul to the Select Committee of the Directors, we find a concise and clear account of the condition of the Nabob's government, as well as the measures which were adopted for its settlement.

* When Ram Narrain was believed to have joined the Vizier of Oude, Clive (according to Scrafton) advised the Nabob to remove him openly. The Nabob dreaded the consequences of such a direct proceeding. Subsequently to this, Ram Narrain fully satisfied Clive, through Roy Dullub, that he had no treasonable intentions, and required only security for his life and a continuance in his employment. A conviction of his sincerity led Clive to advise the Nabob to the course he pursued.

† 23d December, 1757.

" In laying open the state of this government," he observes, " I am concerned to mention that the present Nabob is a prince of little capacity, and not at all blessed with the talent of gaining the love and confidence of his principal officers. His mismanagement threw the country into great confusion in the space of a few months, and might have proved of fatal consequence to himself, but for our known attachment to him. No less than three rebellions were on foot at one time; one at Midnapore, headed by Rajah Ram; another at Purnea, under Addul Sing; and a third at Patna, under Ram Narrain: all which may be very well attributed to the Nabob's own imprudence. Rajah Ram's two brothers, after being invited to Moorshedabad, were imprisoned, which was quite sufficient to deter him from surrendering himself as he intended. Meer Azuffee was appointed to the government of Purnea to the general satisfaction of the people; but soon laid aside for Cuddum Hussein Khan, a relation (it is true) of the Nabob, but a tyrannical, rapacious fellow, and odious to the last degree to the Purneans. As for Ram Narrain, after he made his submission, and the Nabob had sworn to continue him in his government, apparent measures were taken for his overthrow.

" The prime minister, Roy Dullub, who was

one of the chief instruments of the Nabob's promotion, and had received in return solemn assurances of continuing his Dewan, was suspected to be engrossing the power in his hands, and rather to have encouraged the rebellions than endeavoured to suppress them. It is very certain that Roy Dullub had a powerful party in the state, and more than probable that he took measures to strengthen it, according to the common policy of all Dewans. However this might be, the Nabob's jealousy of him was arrived to such a height, that Suraj-u-Dowlah's brother, a young lad, and almost an idiot, was suddenly cut off, on a surmise of Roy Dullub's intending to make him Nabob, and having sent his own brother to Chandernagore to engage me in the design, which is altogether groundless. Roy Dullub no sooner knew of this sudden execution, and the motives for it, than he began to fear for his own life; and open hostilities might possibly have ensued if we had not been a check upon each party. The Nabob, who at this time was encamped in the neighbourhood of Moorshedabad, accompanied by a detachment of our troops, excuses himself from any knowledge of the transaction, and lays the whole blame on his son, who was left in government of the city; but many circumstances induced us to believe otherwise. Roy Dullub, on pretence of

sickness, was still at Moorshedabad, having a large body of his own troops with him, as is usual in these governments; but it is not improbable the chief reason for his remaining behind was a view to his own safety. Affairs were in this situation when I arrived at Moorshedabad. I would willingly have engaged Roy Dullub to accompany me to the Nabob's, that I might have effected a reconciliation between them; but his illness not admitting him to set out immediately, I could only assure him of my protection, and engage his promise to follow me as soon as possible.

"The 3d instant, our army came up with the Nabob's at Fettiapoor, near Rajah-mahul, where we still continue encamped, chiefly to wait the minister's arrival. I should have acquainted you that some days before I set out from Chandernagore, Rajah Ram, the Midnapore rebel, came and delivered himself up to me; on promise of the Nabob's pardon and our protection. This first unlinked the chain of the three rebellions, the chiefs of which had held a correspondence, and were connected together. Rajah Ram's submission may be deemed a very fortunate event in all respects; for his good sense, long experience in the affairs of this government, and the great influence he has in the country, would have made him as dangerous

an enemy to the Nabob as he is now a useful friend to us. Upon our approach, and some of the Nabob's troops having passed the river into the Purnea country, the rebels of that quarter quitted their intrenchments and dispersed, but some of their chiefs were overtaken and made prisoners; so that two of the rebellions are effectually quieted, and the third is in a fair way of being peaceably accommodated. If it is in my power to bring about the thorough reconciliation which I intend between the Nabob and Roy Dullub, all domestic troubles may be fully put an end to in this country. As for any apprehensions of a foreign enemy, they are not very strong at present. The Vizier, with the assistance of the Mahrattas, drove Nujeeb Khan, the Affghan Bukhshee, out of Delhi; but the latter being reinforced with a large body of Patans, who are the Affghans that have settled for some time in Hindustan, is again making head in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and will be joined by Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude. So that all the powers from whom any danger might be expected are too much engaged among themselves to bend their thoughts this way for the present. The Nabob's confirmation is not yet procured at Delhi, nor can I judge when it will. The difficulty is in the price.

"I have waited for Roy Dullub's arrival with

great impatience, as Durbar business cannot be transacted without him; and we have some points to settle of great consequence to your interest. We have already had occasion to observe the difficulties attending every application for money to the Durbar, and I foresee they will increase as the Nabob grows stronger, and we become less necessary; therefore I have determined not to leave this ground till I procure sufficient assignments on the revenues of some country near Calcutta for the annual payment of the money still due by treaty; together with proper writings from the Zemindars of such country for the regular discharge of the same, which we may enforce if necessary. We have already obtained the Nabob's promise to comply as soon as his minister arrives; but it was not without much private opposition from Jugget Seit, who, following the same method with regard to all debts due to him from the government, has already demands on most of the Zemindars. However, on being threatened with the loss of our friendship, he desisted. It is not impossible but we may find Roy Dullub likewise averse to our carrying this point, as he may become, by it, a good deal less necessary to us, than when our applications were to be directed to him; but as the Nabob has given his promise, and the matter now wholly

rests with him, he cannot find any way of evading a compliance, without a manifest breach of friendship, which I think he would not venture on in his present situation."

Major Coote, who pursued M. Law, till the French party passed Benares, made a complaint of the conduct of the ruler of Patna, from whom he states that he met with obstruction instead of aid. This letter was dated on the 8th of August, a period when Ram Narrain had sufficient proofs of the hostile disposition of the Nabob, but was ignorant what part the English commander meant to take. The moment he received the assurance of protection which Clive gave him, he not only submitted, but went to Meer Jaffier's camp, which had then reached the vicinity of Patna.

Intrigues were commenced, which, notwithstanding the promises made to him, had for their object, the removal of this powerful Hindu, in whose place the Nabob desired to put his brother. On the other hand, Ram Narrain united his interests with Roy Dullub, who, though assured of protection from the English, appeared still to entertain doubts of his own safety. All parties looked to Clive, who was encamped at Bankapore, a village a few miles west of Patna.

While affairs were yet unsettled, an affray oc-

curred in the market between some of the English sepoys and Ram Narrain's horsemen, in which several lives were lost. The excited state of men's minds was such, that this trifling dispute had nearly been attended with the most serious consequences. Apprehension of the recurrence of such accidents induced Clive to move his troops to an island in the Ganges, opposite to his former position.

Though Meer Jaffier does not appear to have entertained, at this period, the treacherous designs imputed to him, he continued irresolute, until Clive, in a personal conference, succeeded in convincing him that both his honour and his interests were concerned in the re-establishment of Ram Narrain. Clive has stated what occurred on this occasion in a letter * to the Court of Directors. "The Nabob," he observes in this despatch, "applying to me to accommodate between him and Ram Narrain, and promising that if he would submit himself, his life and property should be secure, and his government continued to him, I wrote him conformably, engaging myself to be security for the Nabob's promise. On receipt of my letter, he immediately left Patna, and met me the 25th ultimo at Hybut-Gunge. It was the 29th before he could wait on the Nabob, for want of a lucky

* Dated Rockypoor, near Patna, 18th February, 1758.

day, and then I sent Mr. Watts to introduce him. The wavering disposition of the Nabob, and the ear he gives to evil counsellors, who endeavour to inspire notions into him of our having too great an influence in the country, have occasioned me some trouble in these mediations. However, as he perceives in the end that my endeavours are entirely directed to his good and the public quiet, his jealousies are quickly effaced. The distance between us during the march prevented any interview from my leaving Rajah-mahul till our arrival at Patna; which time was industriously made use of, by the envious and self-interested, to alienate him from the English, and induce him to break his promise to Ram Narrain. Their artful suggestions were too easily admitted; and many signs appeared of coolness towards us, as well as an intention of giving the province of Bahar to his brother Meer Cassim Ali Khan. Having occasion, however, to wait on the Nabob the 14th instant, to congratulate him on his entry into Patna, I represented to him the impossibility of retracting the promise he had made through me to Ram Narrain; and intimated, as well as the nicety of the subject would bear, the advantage of trusting the government to a person of his moderate and peaceable disposition, rather than putting it into imprudent, and at the same time

dangerous, hands. My discourse had weight, and Ram Narrain was confirmed."

In a private letter, written the day after this despatch, to his friend Mr. Pigot, Clive gives a forcible description of the actual condition of affairs at Meer Jaffier's court, and of his own situation at this period. He observes, "The Nabob's conduct is weak beyond conception; and you may be assured, whenever we are wanting in a force to overawe and protect him, ruin will ensue. You cannot imagine the trouble I have had these three weeks past, in our march to this place; and, since his arrival, he has been wanting to make his brother, who is a greater fool than himself, Nabob of Bahar, in prejudice of Ram Narrain, a Gentoo, universally beloved and respected, and that in breach of his promises to me, whom he desired to write to him to engage him to come down and pay his respects. Not one of his rajahs would come to or treat with him, without letters of assurance from me. His Prime Minister, Roy Dullub, who has more than half the army under his command, is entirely in our interests, as is Ram Narrain and all Bahar; so that, in spite of his folly, we can oblige him to act for his own interest and that of the Company.

"Though there is nothing I so earnestly wish for as returning to the coast, that I may

have a good plea for quitting the service entirely, yet I have set my heart so much upon a happy conclusion of the Moorshedabad expedition, that I am determined to stay in Bengal another year, if no news from England prevents it; for there is such a connection between the Nabob, myself, and his great men, that I greatly fear my absence would throw all into confusion, and there would be an end of the remaining part of the debt and of the fortifications. Whereas, by staying till this time twelve months, two thirds of the debt will be paid, and the fortifications in great forwardness. Besides, so large a sum has been advanced by the Company to the navy and army, I think myself bound to see the major part of it repaid by the Nabob. By that time eighteen of the twenty will be received.

"I hope my good friend will acquit me of the crime of vanity in expressing my apprehension of the evil consequences of quitting Bengal at this juncture. These foolish people ground their opinions and confidence in one man's abilities alone. Before we took the field, it was with the greatest difficulty he could be prevailed upon to issue out of his treasury 10,000 rupees; and since my joining him he has already paid twenty-five lacs, and given security for the payment of ten more."

Clive's negotiations with the Nabob were finally

attended with all the success that such a court and so weak a character allowed. A supply of money was procured for the extraordinary expenses of the army; the perwannah, or grant of lands yielded to the Company, was passed in all its forms; orders were issued for the immediate discharge of all arrears on the first six months of the Nabob's debt, and the revenues of Burdwan, Nuddea, and Hooghley assigned over for payment of the rest: "so that," says Clive, writing * to the Court of Directors, "the discharge of the debt is now become independent of the Nabob, which precaution is become absolutely necessary, as his calls for money are greater than he can answer. Nothing but a total revolution in the government can well interrupt your payments." These matters being settled to his satisfaction, he had accompanied the Nabob, at his urgent request to Patna, that by his presence he might assist him in settling that province, and by showing himself on the frontier along with the Nabob, and his numerous army, he might at once awe all foreign enemies, and hasten down the Sunnud in favour of the Nabob, from Delhi. "All domestic troubles," he adds in the same letter, "are now happily ended; and the Nabob seems so well fixed in his government, as to be able, with a small degree

* 18th February, 1758.

of prudence, to maintain himself quietly in it. For ourselves, we have been so fortunate in these transactions as to attach to us the most considerable persons in the kingdom; and, by the constancy with which we successively supported Rajah Ram, Roy Dullub, and Ram Narrain, to acquire the general confidence, and make our friendship be solicited on all sides. On the whole, we may pronounce, that this expedition, without bloodshed, has been crowned with all the advantages that could be expected or wished, both to the Nabob and the Company."

Clive, nevertheless, saw every moment more and more the necessity of the English permanently emancipating themselves from dependence upon their native allies. The Select Committee at Fort William, alarmed lest the French should make an attempt on Calcutta, wished him to apply to the Nabob to send a large force to Hooghley, to act in co-operation with them in the event of an attack. The reply from Clive, and Mr. Watts, who was associated with him in his civil and political duties, while it exposes the impolicy of such an application, shows their opinion regarding the little reliance that could be placed on the friendship of Meer Jaffier, however recent and great his obligation to the English.

"We cannot," they observe*, "avoid differing greatly in opinion from you, gentlemen, on the subject of requesting the Nabob to have a large force down at Hooghley, to be ready for assistance against our enemies the French. Such a publication of our fear and weakness would, we think, be a step the most impolitic and most prejudicial to the Company's interest that could possibly be taken. Meer Jaffier (according to the practice of all Mussulmen) has long since forgot the services rendered him by the English, and looks upon them as encroachers upon his power, reputation, and authority. It is now some months, gentlemen, that we have been fully convinced that the Nabob has looked upon the English with an envious eye, and that he is influenced by his fears only to do them justice.

"The consequence of our application to the Nabob would occasion a great coolness in his behaviour towards us, and a refusal to fulfil the rest of his treaty; neither does this prospect of danger appear to us so near as to oblige us to make known our apprehensions to the whole province."

The same feeling of the necessity of the Presidency of Bengal providing for its own security, led Clive at this period to express to the Select Committee at Fort William his pointed disap-

* 6th March, 1758.

probation of their delays in repairing their fortifications.

"I cannot conclude," he observes in a letter* written the day he left Patna, "without representing to you, gentlemen, in the strongest terms, the great stake the Company have in Bengal, and how much that stake is exposed for want of a fortification. It gives me concern, beyond what I can express, to hear from all hands that the works go on very slowly. At a time like this, no private workmen should be allowed, but all employed for the public service; and if the want of hands arise only from the want of a few pice† more, I think such a saving does not merit one moment's consideration, or that such economy can meet with the Company's approbation at this juncture. Be assured, gentlemen, if Calcutta be left defenceless through any neglect of ours, and should fall into the hands of our enemies a second time, we shall entail upon ourselves a censure never to be effaced."

Clive obtained, before he quitted Patna, a monopoly of the saltpetre of that province for the Company. This grant was, in every respect, very advantageous to the English; and no less so to the Nabob, who received as much revenue, and more certain payment, than he had

* 12th January, 1758.

† A small copper coin, forty to a rupee.

done before. The officers of Meer Jaffier were, however, discontented with an arrangement by which they lost the bribes and presents which they formerly received from the contractors for that article. After this and other matters were settled, Clive proceeded to Moorshedabad, accompanied by Roy Dullub, with whom he had to adjust many points connected with the full performance of the treaty.

The object of Clive, throughout this short expedition to Patna, was to reconcile, as far as he could, the jarring interests which distracted the court of Meer Jaffier, and threatened to disturb the peace of the country. His honour, and the public interests, strongly attached him to the Nabob; though, at the same time, it was not only politic, but indispensably necessary, to keep the power of that prince within limits. He felt himself especially bound to protect Roy Dullub from the enemies by whom he was threatened. That minister, it will be recollected, was one of the chief instruments in effecting the revolution; and had subsequently received, both from Clive and Meer Jaffier, the fullest assurances of safety to his life and property.

Clive, on the expedition to Patna, and on all other occasions, communicated with Meer Jaffier upon every subject. He often visited him; and giving scope to the natural bent of his tem-

per, entered into his amusements. But it was impossible to reconcile that prince to his condition; which was more humiliating from the circumstance of his presenting to his countrymen the first instance, in Bengal, of the power of a proud Mahommedan sovereign being overshadowed by that of a body of merchants, who, before this great change, had never appeared at the court of his predecessors but as humble supplicants endeavouring to obtain commercial privileges. Many of the nobles and generals by whom the Nabob was surrounded had been, a year or two before, courted by bribes and flattery to protect the persons, or to promote the trade, of the very English agents on whose pleasure or policy their fortune and character now depended. To add to the strong and rankling feelings which such a change must have excited, the Mahommedan prince and his chiefs found themselves deserted by the wary and pliant Hindus, who, possessing greater foresight, and expecting security and advancement from the change of masters, were ready, on the first alarm of danger to their life or property, to seek the protection of the English. This the latter were in many cases under the necessity of granting; for, from the first, they had not intrinsic strength which could enable them to cope with those with whom they were hourly exposed to come in collision. They

could not have remained in Bengal without the means of self-defence; they could not repel or retaliate an attack without counteracting and defeating their enemies; they could not retreat without ruin, from the ground to which their successes had advanced them; and they could only maintain themselves by forming and improving their connections in the country. Though the cultivation and support of the ties, which this course led them to establish, created divisions among those whose union would have been their destruction, it had at the same time the evil of cherishing feuds, rebellions, and revolutions. Supposing those who had lost all but the name of authority by our progress had been so well satisfied of our decided superiority as to become patient wearers of the degraded trappings of state, could they have reconciled their proud followers to obedience and submission to those whom they deemed foreign upstarts, and whose power became every day more galling from the abuses committed by the meanest of the natives * of India employed in their service, or guarded by their protection?

It is not meant, by these observations, to

* Clive early saw all the evils that would arise from the conduct of the natives employed by the English, and adopted every measure he could to check the growth of this danger; but this subject will be fully noticed hereafter.

question the necessity which compelled our advance to power in Bengal. There was no alternative between its attainment and abandoning that country altogether; but while we do justice to ourselves, we should not be unjust to those who opposed us by intrigue or in battle. We should, at all events, judge them according to their habits, their knowledge, and the feelings and opinions of the community to which they belonged. Alarm for their lives, hatred and distrust of each other, or the lust of power, might make them confederate with us for the purpose of the moment. To this they might also be induced by that arrogant confidence, which is ever the concomitant of ignorance. They might hope to direct or command those with whom they had combined to destroy their enemies. But when this dream of self-delusion was dispelled, when they found that they themselves had been made the instruments of subverting the dominion of the race to which they belonged, and that their power was now controlled by the very persons by whom it had been so recently established, — it became natural for them, and for all whose fame and fortune were associated with them, to seek, through every means, emancipation from such humiliating thraldom. I have expressed my sentiments very strongly upon this subject, and may be con-

demned by those who, alike regardless of usage and of feeling, are guided in their judgment of every public and private act by partial principles, and by a local and limited scale of moral rectitude; but I shall appeal from such a decision to all who, true to the feelings and affections which are implanted in every breast, cherish attachment to their family, their tribe, and their country. I ask of these, what would have been their conduct, if placed in the depressed and degraded condition of Meer Jaffier, his kindred, his nobles, and their followers?

Clive was fully sensible of the character of the motives by which the latter were influenced. He saw and felt for their condition, and imputed their intrigues and conspiracies, less to their personal characters than to the general causes to which I have alluded. He did not, therefore, expect any sudden change in their sentiments; but he tried, by every act in his power, to render that control which it was necessary to exercise less irksome. His conduct, however, had often the effect of lowering those he desired to exalt; for it brought his actions into strong contrast with the weak machinations of men, who could neither conceal their jealousy of his power, nor their own inability to cope with his superior mind.

The natives of Bengal, as yet ignorant of the

construction of the English government, ascribed every thing to Clive. They considered him as the exclusive author of the success which had attended the English arms; and with his life many expected it to terminate. The existence of such sentiments gave probability to the reports of plots said to have been formed, both at Moorshedabad and at Patna, for his assassination; and he was warned of them by persons who deemed their information authentic. But he does not appear to have given such warnings any attention. He continued steadily to pursue his object of supporting the Nabob he had raised to the throne, while at the same time he took every measure to save the interests of his country from the dangers to which they were exposed from the vacillating weakness, or the excited feelings, of that prince.

When Clive arrived at Moorshedabad with Roy Dullub, he found the Nabob's son Meeran in a state of great irritation, at the restoration of that Hindu influence, which it was the real though concealed object of Meer Jaffier's expedition to Patna to destroy. The disposition of this young man, as far as it had yet developed itself, was sanguinary and rapacious. He was, as has been related, the cause of Suraj-u-Dowlah's being put to death: and this act, with the more recent assassination of the son of that

Prince, and the imprisonment of his mother, had made him unpopular with the more peaceable part of his father's subjects, particularly the Hindus, who dreaded his cruelty and violence. But the Mahommedan chiefs and soldiers, whose pride had been wounded, and who were checked in their licentious habits, hailed these qualities, which, combined with Meeran's known jealousy and hatred of the English, gave them hopes of recovering, through his means, their lost influence and power.

Meeran had entered warmly into his father's feelings of jealousy of the rising consequence of Clive, increased as it had been by his success in quelling, through the influence of his personal character, the three rebellions which lately threatened the state; but the chief subjects of irritation were his open protection of Roy Dullub, and his travelling with that minister to Moorshedabad. The Prince felt, or affected to feel, alarmed at their approach: he commenced levying troops, and declared to Mr. Scrafton, that unless Clive gave him a solemn promise of protection, he would be compelled to have recourse to arms, to avert the danger with which his life was threatened by the hostility of Roy Dullub. He not only made these sentiments public, but went out of the city in apparent alarm as Clive entered it. Clive, who had received a private letter

from Mr. Scrafton * informing him of Meeran's conduct, was not prepared for this step, which threw Moorshedabad into the utmost consternation. To this was added the receipt of intelligence of a French squadron on the coast of Coromandel, and of the superiority which that nation had acquired in land forces. To coun-

* Mr. Scrafton, in his private letter, under date 15th May, 1758, observes, "In the morning, early, I was informed the young Nabob's troops were ready for a march, and presently Petrus came to me and told me the Nabob had got his cannon loaded and his troops ready. I sent him to know the cause. The Nabob, when he had dismissed his servants, put on a face of importance, and Petrus asked him what all these preparations were for. He said Roy Dullub was not true to him, and that he was afraid of Sabut Jung; that if Sabut Jung would send him his promise and faith to attempt nothing against him, it was well; if not, he would leave the city with those who were faithful to him, and go to his father; and, if any body offered to stop him, he would fight his way. That Roy Dullub had brought down a relation of Sunder Sing's, who had wrote to an officer in his service to offer his oath of fidelity to Cunjoo Beharry, which he had actually given. In short, he gave to understand that Roy Dullub was his enemy, and if you did not give him some security one of them must fall. I intend to go to him in the evening, and set his brain right if I can. He has entertained some Tellingays (about fifty) that are come *via* Ballasore. Either he shams, and has orders sent him by Goolam Hassen Khan and Monickchund, who arrived yesterday, to attempt Roy Dullub's life, or his fears have got the better of his *blockhead-ship*. The old Begum sent for Petrus and fell a blubbering, saying that she had but that son, and could not spare him."

teract the bad impressions which such news might make at so critical a moment, Clive exaggerated a slight naval success which had been obtained by the English into a complete victory.* He also wrote to the Nabob on the same day, complaining of the strange behaviour of Meeran, and stating that he could not continue in Bengal, if his zeal to support him was to be rewarded with suspicion and distrust. But before an answer was received, the Prince, persuaded of his error, had returned to the city, and made the most submissive apologies for his conduct.

Clive remained only a few days at Moorshedabad. Soon after his arrival at Calcutta, a vessel † from England brought out the arrangements made by the Directors subsequently to their receiving the intelligence of their misfortunes in Bengal. The first measure, adopted in August, 1757, was the appointment of a temporary Committee of five, in which Clive was to preside. This was changed in November; and it was resolved to dismiss Mr. Drake, upon whose incompetency all appear to have been agreed; and a council of ten was nominated, the four

* In the indecisive action between Sir G. Pocock and M. D'Aché, one of the enemy's vessels was stranded. It was reported at Moorshedabad that two were taken.

† The Hardwicke Indiaman.

senior members of which were to preside alternately, each for three months. In this second arrangement no mention whatever was made of Clive; and as the letter of August did not reach Bengal before that of November, he received at the same moment the account of his first appointment, and of the subsequent marked neglect of the Directors. But their last resolution was of little consequence, as circumstances rendered its execution impossible, except at the serious hazard of all the great advantages which had been obtained. This sentiment was universal; but by none was it felt so strongly as by the gentlemen appointed to the Council, and above all by those who were advanced by the Court of Directors to a share in the divided office of Governor. I shall spare the reader all comments upon this extraordinary expedient, which was no doubt the crude offspring of faction and mistrust. It is a more pleasing task to record the better feeling and better understanding of the true interests of their country which pervaded the councils of the local government.

I am induced to insert the following letter to Clive from the new Council, not more from its containing an excellent summary of the reasons which led them to request he would fill the station of their President, than because I deem

it alike honourable to their zeal and disinterestedness.

" Sir,

" Our most serious attention has been devoted to the commands of our honourable employers per Hardwicke, naming a rotation of Governors for the future management of their affairs at this settlement; and, having duly weighed the nature of this regulation with all its attending circumstances, a sincere conviction of its being, in our present situation and circumstances, repugnant to the true interest of our honourable masters, and the welfare of the settlement in general, obliges us (though with the utmost respect and deference) to believe, that had our employers been apprised of the present state of their affairs in this kingdom, they would have placed the presidentship in some one person, as the clearest and easiest method of conducting their concerns, as well as preserving and maintaining the weight and influence the late happy revolution has given us with the Soubah of these provinces; on which influence, at the present period, the interest and welfare of the Company depends in the highest degree, at this settlement.

" The difficulties we may be liable to by a rotation in the executive part of government, with its consequences, are sufficiently obvious in

our present state of affairs; we will, however, mention only a few points: the treaty with the Nabob not perfected in all its branches, the possession of the lands incomplete, the settlement in no posture of defence, the French considerably reinforced with a military and a fleet, their designs with respect to Bengal hitherto unknown, and the impossibility of impressing a proper idea of this divided power on the minds of the Soubah and others of this kingdom, who have, at all times, been accustomed to the government of a single person. A little reflection will introduce many more, and clearly evince the necessity of this address.

"The gentlemen nominated Governors in the Honourable Company's commands per Hardwicke, have the highest sense of gratitude for the honour conferred on them by our employers in their appointment; but deem themselves in duty bound, at this juncture of affairs, to wave all personal honours and advantages, and declare, as their sentiments, that a rotation in the executive part of Government, for the foregoing reasons, would be extremely prejudicial to the real interest of the Company; in which opinion we unanimously concur, and judge it for the welfare of our honourable employers, and of the settlement in general, to deviate in

this instance from the commands of our honourable masters, and fix the presidentship in a single person till we hear further from Europe.

" Your being named as head of the General Committee (in the letter of the 3d of August last) established at that time for conducting the Company's affairs in Bengal, your eminent services, abilities, and merit, together with your superior weight and influence with the present Soubah and his officers, are motives which have great force with us on this occasion; and all concur in pointing out you, at the present, as best able to render our honourable employers necessary service at this juncture, till they shall make their further pleasure known by the appointment of a President for their affairs here.

" These reasons urge us to make you an offer of being President of the Company's affairs in Bengal, till a person is appointed by the Honourable Company; and we flatter ourselves you will be induced to accept of our offer, from your wonted regard to the interest of our honourable employers, and zeal for the welfare of their affairs, which we doubt not you are, as well as ourselves, convinced will be much prejudiced by a rotation in the executive part of government.

" We wait your reply, and have the honour to be,

" Sir,

" Your most obedient,

" and most humble servants.

" Fort William,
" 26th June, 1758."

Clive appears to have been so much hurt by the conduct of the Court of Directors, that he had determined not to accept the station offered him. Mr. Watts, whose name was first upon the list of the Rotation-government (as it was termed) wrote him a private letter, in which he entreated him, by every consideration for the public interests, not to refuse his services at so critical a period. His answer to this letter is remarkable, as it shows the feelings under which he acted.

" I have considered *," he states, " what you proposed to me, and judge myself under a necessity of declining the Government. Both the public and my private advices, I think, plainly discover that the Presidency of Bengal was by no means intended for me by the Court of Directors; and a temporary acceptance can only ex-

* The date of Clive's private letter to Mr. Watts is the 22d June, four days previous to the date of the above public letter and of his answer to it, in which he accepted the government.

pose me, upon the further alterations which may arrive from Europe, to circumstances of disgrace in the eyes of the Country Government, which, I believe it is unnecessary for me to remark, might be prejudicial to the Company's affairs. At the same time I cannot sufficiently express my sense of the disinterestedness which you, and the gentlemen of the Council have shown in this generous offer, and of the honour you have thereby conferred on me."

The representations of all ranks and parties, and the conviction of the truth of the grounds on which they were founded, led Clive to alter this resolution, and to write the following letter to the Council.

" Gentlemen,

" I have received your letter of this day's date, and cannot sufficiently express the grateful sense I have of the favourable opinion you are pleased to entertain of me, which has induced you to desire my acceptance of the Presidency at this critical juncture.

" Though I think I have cause to be dissatisfied with the Court of Directors, for laying me aside in their new form of Government, without any reason assigned, after having named me as head of the General Committee in the letter of the 3d of August last, yet, animated by

the noble example of public spirit which you have set me, I have determined to wave all private considerations, where the general good is concerned; and as there is no doubt but the government of a single person, involved as we are now with the country powers, must have infinite advantage over that complicated form of government established from home, I shall, from that motive (though both my health and private concerns strongly require my returning to Europe), accept the offer you have done me the honour to make me, till such time as our employers have appointed a President in the usual form.

"I cannot omit testifying my acknowledgments, Gentlemen, to you all in general, for the zeal you have discovered for the service of our masters upon this occasion; but in particular to you who have been nominated to be in the rotation of governors. You have made such a sacrifice, that few, if any instances can be given of the like. You have, of your own accord, parted with the dignity of government, and all the advantages thereunto annexed, because you apprehend that the Company's affairs could not be properly conducted under a government so constituted.

"Unequal as I am to the weighty task of directing this Presidency, especially in civil matters, to which I have never been able to give

due attention, on account of my military avocations, I am now, Gentlemen, to beg the assistance of your advice, and therefore hope you will persevere in the zeal you have hitherto so abundantly shown, and that none of you, but more particularly Mr. Watts, who can render me considerable services from his thorough knowledge of the politics of the country, will entertain a thought of leaving me, till affairs are finally determined from home.

" I am, Gentlemen,

" Your most obedient, humble Servant,

(Signed) " R. CLIVE.

" Calcutta,
" June 26th, 1758."

Clive states that he was in a great degree induced to change his first resolution, by the tenor of a letter from Mr. Payne, the Chairman of the Court of Directors, which satisfied him that, notwithstanding what had occurred, there was a strong feeling, in some of that body, as well as the principal members of the administration in England, to treat him with favour and distinction.

" I have a perfect sense *," Mr. Payne states, " of the many disagreeable circumstances that may have attended the several expeditions of this year, wherein you have had so great a

* Nov. 11. 1757.

share; nor can any one have felt more experimentally than myself the difficulty of pleasing every one, with the most disinterested conduct and the warmest pursuits for that purpose; nor have I been wanting in reflections on the many mortifications you may have met with, from the jealousy that the almost unlimited powers you were vested with by the Select Committee at Fort St. George gave rise to. I must confess, I should think them dangerous, in other hands than yours, and such as, I really think, our Court of Directors could scarce have been justified in giving to any one person whatever. Had the powers been more limited, I think you could not have had it less in your power to show and exercise your readiness and abilities in serving the Company, which I am persuaded you have done without mean or selfish views."

The Chairman, after noticing in this communication the difficulty the Court of Directors have had in framing a temporary arrangement for Bengal, and expressing a hope that the expedient they had fallen upon would answer better than was expected, states their intention of adopting every means to add to their military force.

"After being disappointed," he observes, "in various attempts for raising recruits in Germany, Ireland, Scotland, and England, His Majesty

has been pleased to order us a battalion of about one thousand men out of the new regiments. Mr. Pitt was the first to propose the measure to His Majesty. Upon his mentioning it the next day to me, I took the liberty of suggesting to him the many difficulties and evils we had been exposed to, during the stay of Colonel Adlercron's regiment, in instances which I certainly need not point out to you. He stopt me very short, by saying, he would forestall me in regard to any apprehensions I might have by the clashing of different commands; as it was his intention the troops should be under Colonel Lawrence and your command."

Mr. Payne also informed Clive in this letter, that Mr. Pitt and Lord Barrington had hinted a desire to send Clive a Colonel's commission; but that, while he had expressed thankfulness for this intended mark of favour, he had suggested the name of Colonel Lawrence also. "I could not be unmindful," he adds, "of your most genteel and disinterested conduct on a former occasion in England, in regard to that mark * of the Company's respect for you, which you rather declined and were unwilling to accept of, without Colonel Lawrence sharing with you.

* This probably alludes to the diamond-hilted sword which the Court of Directors voted Clive for his services in the Carnatic.

I am well persuaded you will continue to act and think upon the same generous principles; and that you must be so sensible of that gentleman's good services, and the need the Company still have of the continuance of them, that you will be far from looking with a jealous eye on the mention I have made to those Honourable Gentlemen of my apprehension of our being entirely deprived of the Colonel's future services, if he should be taken no notice of, though he was not immediately concerned in the late actions, which had particularly attracted His Majesty's attention in regard to yourself."

Mr. Payne further informed Clive that the Duke of Newcastle had written to the Court of Directors, regarding the propriety of conferring upon him a distinguished mark of the royal favour; but, as this was unaccompanied by any suggestion of a similar honour being intended for Admiral Watson, he thought it would embarrass the Directors; and he had, therefore, with the Duke's concurrence, withheld the communication. He expressed his confidence that Clive would approve of what he had done; and, at all events, that he would be acquitted of having been actuated by any little motive in the part he had taken on that occasion. "Be assured, Sir," Mr. Payne concludes, "I shall always be as ready to propose as to concur in

any measures that may be hereafter thought of to do you honour or pleasure; and that it is a great one to me to reflect, that your attention to the service you are engaged in, by exposing your person on so many different occasions, may and has been attended not only with the honours and laurels that adorn the brow of a conqueror, but with some more solid fruits of your labour; which may in some degree compensate for the toils that precede victory and success."

This communication could not but be agreeable to Clive; and, in his reply, he expresses satisfaction with Mr. Payne's conduct on all those points which related to his personal honour and preferment. He also states, that a knowledge of the favourable sentiments which were entertained of his conduct by some of the principal members of the Court was his chief inducement for accepting the proffered station of President.

The Court of Directors had formed this Government of Rotation at a period when they could not have anticipated the great changes which had taken place in Bengal: that this was the case, is proved by the fact of the subsequent appointment of Clive to the station of Governor, the moment they heard of the battle of Plassey. They appear, also, to have recognised the high and disinterested motives which induced the

Council to invite him to be their President; and, though sufficiently alive on such points, we cannot discover from the records, that they ever viewed the setting aside of their arrangement on this extraordinary and unprecedented occasion as a measure that evinced contempt for their judgment and authority.*

* Mr. Mill, when noticing the Council's request to Clive, observes, "Convinced that he alone had sufficient authority to overcome the Nabob into the performance of his obligations, the Council (including the four gentlemen who were appointed governors) came to a resolution highly expressive of their own disinterestedness and patriotism, but full of disregard and contempt for the judgment and authority of their superiors."—Mill, vol. iii. p. 244.

CHAP. VIII.

CLIVE's first object, after he accepted the Government of Bengal, was to give what aid he could to Fort St. George. The view he took of the dangers of that settlement, and the measures he adopted to afford it relief, are thus described by a contemporary historian.*

" No one doubted that Madras would be besieged, as soon as the monsoon had sent the squadrons off the coast, if reinforcements should not arrive before. But Clive did not entertain the surmise that it could be taken whilst it had provisions; and, as troops were known to be on the way from England, if the ships in which they were embarked should lose their passage in this year, they would probably arrive in the first months of the next. Nevertheless it was necessary, if possible, to alleviate the inequality between the English and French force in Coromandel.

" But the preference which each of the Company's Presidencies was naturally inclined to give to its own safety, as the only ground on

* Orme, vol. ii. p. 363.

which the property and fortunes of the whole community were established, suggested apprehensions that Madras, in the same manner as it had been treated by the Presidency of Calcutta, would, whatever might be the necessity of Bengal, detain on their own service whatsoever troops might be sent to their assistance; and, although little was to be immediately apprehended in Bengal from the French, yet the entire estrangement of the Nabob, and the hazard of all that remained due from him, were to be expected, if he saw the English force too considerably diminished, without the immediate power of recall, to oppose either his own attempts against them, or to afford the assistance he might want, whether in the maintenance of his authority against his own subjects, or the defence of his territory against foreign enemies.

" In consequence of these conclusions it was determined not to send a body of troops to Madras, but to employ all that could with prudence be spared, in concert with Anunderauze, against the French in the ceded provinces *; which would either occasion a diversion of their troops in the Carnatic, or, if they neglected this assistance, would deprive them at once of all

* The country usually known by the name of the Northern Circars, which had been ceded by the Soubah Salabut Jung to the French.

they had acquired by their long connection with the Soubah of the Deckan; and, lest any danger during the expedition should threaten Bengal, the troops were only to obey the immediate orders of Calcutta.

"The conduct of the expedition was committed to Lieutenant-Colonel Forde, who, on the invitation of the Presidency to take the command of the army in case of the departure of Colonel Clive, had quitted the King's service in Adlercron's regiment, and arrived from the coast in the month of April. Mr. George Grey was sent to continue the course of intelligence at Cuttack, and Mr. John Johnstone was despatched in the Mermaid sloop to make the necessary preparations in concert with Anunderauze at Vizagapatam. The force allotted for the expedition was five hundred Europeans, including the artillery men, two thousand sepoys, and one hundred lascars: the artillery were six field-pieces, the best brass six-pounders, six twenty-four-pounders for battery, a howitz, and an eight-inch mortar: eighty thousand rupees, and four thousand gold mohurs, equivalent to sixty thousand rupees, were in the military chest for immediate expenses. The embarkation was made on three of the Company's ships arrived lately from Europe, on the Thames, a private ship of seven hundred tons, with two

of the pilot sloops of the river. The Thames, likewise, carried a great quantity of provisions intended for Madras, whither she was to proceed as soon as the present service would permit. By altercations in the Council, for the measure was too vigorous to be acceptable to all of them, and by delays in the equipment, the vessels were detained in the river till the end of September. Their departure left the English force in the province barely equal to what they carried away." *

* A modern writer has noticed Clive's conduct on this occasion in less favourable terms: —

"Clive," Mr. Mill observes[a], "chose to remain in Bengal, where he was master, rather than go to Madras, where he would be under command; and determined not to lessen his power by sending troops to Madras, which the Presidency, copying his example, might forget to send back. An enterprise at the same time presented itself, which, though its success would have been vain had the French in the Carnatic prevailed, bore the appearance of a co-operation in the struggle, and afforded a colour for detaining the troops."

I conceive no remark is necessary upon the first part of this paragraph. Every one acquainted with our condition in India at this period must be sensible that Clive's presence was comparatively of little consequence at Fort St. George[b], and that it was essential to the very existence of our power in Bengal; he, therefore, having the option, very properly chose to remain where he was most urgently required.

[a] Vol. iii. p. 247.

[b] Mr. Pigot was governor, and Colonel Lawrence commanded the troops.

Of the brilliant success which attended the expedition under Colonel Forde I shall speak hereafter. I shall content myself at present with the insertion of extracts from the private letters of Clive written at the period of its formation. These, while they show the enlarged and just view he took of the state of affairs on the coast, will prove that he not only gave to that settlement all the aid he had the power of giving it, but that he actually left Bengal almost without European troops, in order to provide for its defence.

The following are extracts from Clive's letters, under different dates, to Mr. Pigot.

" I cannot quit the coast without explaining to you my sentiments of affairs there. I do not find that M. Lally is able to take the field with three thousand men. When our expected forces arrive, and we are joined with those of Madras and Trichinopoly, we shall be two thousand five hundred strong; and I do not think victory so much depends upon equality of numbers as conduct and resolution. From the several accounts I have received of M. Lally, I do not entertain the high opinion of him which he seems to have gained upon the coast; and, indeed, his late behaviour has confirmed me in this opinion. Captain Monchanin, who is here, received a letter from his brother at Paris,

informing him of the manner in which these troops were raised: they were not draughted out of any of the regiments of France, but are composed of foreigners and deserters; these latter had a pardon promised them on condition of enlisting for the East Indies. Although M. Lally is a Colonel on the Irish Brigade, I do not find any of that corps have come out with him. The capture of St. David's ought to add nothing to our apprehensions of his succeeding in future enterprises, for there was no opportunity given of experiencing the courage of his troops, excepting the attack of the fascine party, which, I think, makes rather in praise of our forces than his, since an officer and fifty men could defend it from all attempts of the French from ten in the evening till three next morning. If Colonel Lawrence could, by any means, draw the enemy upon a spot of ground he is wel acquainted with, and attack them in the manner he did at Bawoor, I should entertain great hopes of his success.

" By this time the superiority of our force at sea, I take for granted, is beyond dispute, and of consequence our resources must be more than those of the French. This will be another inducement for us to hazard an engagement, whenever we can do it with the least probability of success. A victory on our side must

confine the French within the walls of Pondicherry; and when that happens, nothing can save them from destruction, but a superior force at sea, of which I see little probability, notwithstanding the report of a third division.

"If it should be thought that we are not strong enough for an offensive war, other measures, I think, may be pursued, which will greatly distress, if not in the end ruin, our enemies. Their great want of money is well known; and every method, which can be thought of, to increase their want of it, must greatly conduce to overset all their offensive schemes. Can't a body of Mahratta or other horse be taken into pay, to burn, ravage, and destroy the whole country in such a manner as that no revenue can be drawn from thence? Bengal is in itself an inexhaustible fund of riches, and you may depend upon being supplied with money and provisions in abundance. In the mean time, what must become of the French if they cannot raise money sufficient to pay their forces? They must disband their blacks, and their white ones will disband themselves. I find M. Lally is gone south. If the King of Tanjore be not overawed into a compliance with M. Lally's demands, and give assistance to Captain Caillaud, I have such an opinion of that gentleman's abilities, and the goodness of his garrison, that I

sincerely believe the French will meet with some disgrace before Trichinopoly.

" You are acquainted with the troubles at Golconda, and that the French are drove out of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, and Chicacole. One Bristow, who resided at Cuttack, is gone to Vizagapatam at the particular request of the Rajah; and I have received a letter from him, desiring assistance in the strongest terms. Two trusty agents are gone to Vizaram-Rauze; and if they bring a promising account of affairs, although our effective force does not exceed seven hundred Europeans, I propose sending into those parts three hundred and fifty Europeans, and two thousand sepoys, and a train of artillery under the command of Colonel Forde. This is not mentioned in the Committee's letters, because not absolutely determined upon. The news from the North may occasion an alteration of measures, though at present there is the greatest prospect of tranquillity.

" If this (expedition) only throw the country into such confusion, as to prevent our enemies collecting any revenues, it will in a great measure answer the design and the expense." *

" Since my last, the three Europe ships, one country, and two sloops, are dropped down to

* Calcutta, 14th August, 1758.

Ingillie. The stores are on board, and the troops will embark in two or three days, and will, I hope, be landed at Vizagapatam, or elsewhere, by the last of this month. You must not expect that these forces will be ordered to proceed to your Presidency. All here are much alarmed at so large a detachment leaving the place, and the gentlemen in Council have made great opposition to it. The expedition, whilst at a distance, did not seem to attract their attention; but now the troops are upon the point of embarking, self-preservation for the present seems to possess every breast, without any regard for the future, or the good of the service in general; and you may be assured, if I was to propose the troops proceeding to Madras, a negative would be given by every one but myself. And to tell you the truth, the gentlemen here seem fully persuaded that the detachments would never be returned, should the exigency of affairs here require it. We shall see what may be effected by January, and whether Bussy may not be kept at bay, and his resources of money, &c. be cut off. If this can be effected, I think the troops cannot be employed more for your advantage, as it may prevent his forces from joining M. Lally.

"You may be persuaded that whilst I preside the most vigorous measures shall be pursued, and I think the present expedition a very

strong proof of it; for I will not conceal from you, that we are in no condition to receive the French, should there be any possibility of their paying us a visit during the absence of our troops. Our effectives are not two hundred and eighty, and those the very scum of the men. Our garrison is drained of stores and ammunition." *

"The detachment of King's † troops on the Warren will return in the same ship, which will sail in a few days for Madras. Not a man shall be kept, but you may depend upon every assistance in our power; and if you can but give M. Lally one blow in the field he is ruined. You may draw upon us for what money you choose: we have twenty lacs of rupees in the treasury, but no bullion: the gold in the Warren will be sent you. The Warren and Cuddalore sloops will be loaded with provisions." ‡

Clive wrote § on the same subject to Colonel Lawrence as follows: —

"Colonel Forde is in the Deckan with a very fine detachment of men. The news from thence you will receive much fresher by this conveyance than I can possibly send you. If we receive

* Calcutta, 15th September, 1758.
† Two companies of Draper's regiment.
‡ Calcutta, 26th December, 1758.
§ Calcutta, 25th December, 1758.

any supplies from England by the two latter ships, I will endeavour to reinforce him with one hundred Europeans; and the whole shall have orders to proceed your way, if we are successful there, and our squadron be arrived upon the coast. The detachment of his Majesty's 64th regiment, which came on the Warren, shall be sent you on the same ship, which will sail in a few days. Remember, my dear Colonel, that if our squadron be superior to that of the French, our enemies will have no resources. I think a body of Mahratta horse, well employed, and supported by our troops, would make such a man as Lally hang himself. You have my most ardent wishes for success: I have contributed al in my power towards it."

A proportion of the recruits which had arrived by the ships of the season were subsequently sent to Madras; and a judgment may be formed of the small military force left in Bengal, from the fact that in the month of February, on the province of Patna being invaded by the Shah Zada (or heir-apparent of the Emperor of Delhi), Clive could only form a force of three hundred European infantry, one hundred artillery, and two thousand five hundred sepoys. With this small body of men, he not only marched towards Patna, but while on that expedition directed that Colonel Forde should proceed to Madras if required.

Clive was anxious for many reasons that Meer Jaffier should pay him a visit at Calcutta. He considered that such an appearance of cordiality would be most useful by the impressions it was likely to produce both upon friends and enemies. This became the more necessary from the state of affairs at Moorshedabad. A packet had been intercepted from the French chief * at Masulipatam, by which it appeared that some of the Nabob's generals had offered to join him. Cojah Wazeed was apparently the principal person concerned in this intrigue. This man, who was formerly the native agent of the French Company, had made himself useful to the English during the confederacy against Suraj-u-Dowlah; but disappointment in his expectations, or some other cause, had alienated him from our interests.

During these intrigues the minister, Roy Dullub, was deprived of his employment, and disgraced. The first step taken to lower him was the appointment of another dewan to the Prince Meeran; and Roy Dullub was commanded to make over to him the accounts of several of the countries in his charge. Nundcomar, the governor of Hooghley, appears also to have been accessary to the disgrace of a minister who had, by his success and the wealth

* M. Moracin.

he had acquired, excited as great a spirit of envy in his own tribe as of cupidity among the Mahommedans. Besides being such an object for the rapacity of the Nabob and his son, Roy Dullub's professed dependence upon the English was a crime not to be forgiven.

Mr. Watts, who had been deputed to invite the Nabob to Calcutta, succeeded in his mission. The few obstacles which interposed were easily overcome, the proposed meeting being for the interest of both parties. Besides, we are assured by one * who had a full opportunity of knowing his most secret sentiments, that Meer Jaffier, notwithstanding his jealousy and discontent with his condition, never could divest himself of a sincere personal regard for Clive. The Nabob probably thought, that his compliance with this request afforded a good opportunity to rid himself of the obnoxious Roy Dullub; and he had no sooner left Moorshedabad, than his son Meeran, no doubt on a preconcerted plan, prepared to attack the minister's house. But the resident, Mr. Scrafton, seeing matters come to an extremity, marched a company of men to his assistance, and took him publicly under the Company's protection. The accounts of these proceedings were sent to Mr. Watts, then with the Nabob, who deemed it politic to disown the

* Mr. Scrafton.

proceedings of his son, and consequently could not refuse the request of Mr. Watts to allow Roy Dullub to accompany them to Calcutta; the resident having satisfied him that while the English were compelled, by the obligations of good faith, to protect the life and honour of a man to whom it was pledged, they had no desire to impose upon Meer Jaffier the employment of a minister to whom he was adverse.

The Nabob was received at Calcutta with every mark of honour and respect: great presents were given to him, and every thing done which could afford him gratification. He appeared much pleased with his treatment; and Clive expressed himself convinced, that, besides the salutary impression in other quarters, the best effects had been produced upon Meer Jaffier's mind by this visit.

Mr. Scrafton at this period left Moorshedabad, and Clive * nominated Mr. Warren Hastings

* In a letter from Mr. Hastings to Clive, of the 13th August, 1758, he observes: —

"As I look upon myself to be principally indebted to you for my appointment to this office (of what advantage soever it may prove to me with respect to my own particular interest), I think it incumbent upon me to make my sincere acknowledgments to you, for your favourable intentions herein; which I cannot do better than by a constant attention to the business entrusted to my charge, and my earnest endeavours to promote the interests of the Company, as far as my capacity will enable me; in which, I hope, I shall always have the happiness to meet with your approbation."

resident at the court of the Nabob; giving, in the selection of this young * but promising civil servant, another proof of that discernment which enabled him to promote his own fame, and the interests of his country, by the employment of men adequate to the task he assigned them. It is here, however, to be remarked, that no consideration which he gave to those under him exempted them from open, and often severe censure, when they deviated from what he deemed their duty. His private letters, even when addressed to men in official stations, though kind, have always the tone of the superior; but though Clive evidently brooked no approach to equality in such persons, their letters evince the greatest confidence in his temper and good feeling, for they are often as full of long and fretful complaints of his own conduct towards them as of their reliance on his friendship. We find this in the correspondence of Mr. Watts, by whom he was greatly aided; and it occurs more frequently in that of Mr. Scrafton, who, though personally much attached to Clive, seems to have been, at different times, very much dissatisfied with the situation in which he was placed.

* Mr. Hastings could not have been above twenty-five years of age when appointed to this arduous and responsible situation.

The first affair in which Mr. Hastings became engaged was of a very delicate nature. Roy Dullub's family were refused leave to follow him to Calcutta, where he had remained after the Nabob left it. Mr. Hastings had hesitated how to act on this occasion, conceiving that the removal of his family, and their property, could not be effected with the same just pretence for interference as that which had obtained for Roy Dullub himself liberty to leave Moorshedabad.

Clive, in answer to this and other letters upon the same subject, observes, "Your apprehension of matters coming to extremities in case a guard be sent to bring away Roy Dullub's family is founded on reason. I never intended you should use force, but merely furnish them with a party of sepoys to escort them down to Calcutta. You are not acquainted with the connections between Roy Dullub and the English, and that they are bound not only to protect him but his family also. You may remonstrate with decency, as often as opportunity offers, that it is unjust to keep the mother and daughter from him. As for his brothers, it is not worth interfering about them. In short, I would have you act upon all occasions so as to avoid coming to extremities, and at the same time show as much spirit and resolution as

will convince the durbar that we always have it in our power to make ourselves respected."

The determined conduct of Clive alarmed the Nabob into an abandonment of the plunder of Roy Dullub's family, who were afterwards allowed to join him; but Cajah Haddee and Cossim Ali Khan, two Mahommedan leaders, who were supposed to be attached to the ex-minister, were dismissed, and afterwards cut off. They were charged with real or pretended plots against the Nabob's life *; and, in the hope of inducing the English government to abandon the protection of Roy Dullub, Meer Jaffier informed Mr. Hastings that Clive and that minister were both said to have written to Cajah Haddee, to encourage him to the act of assassination. He also stated, that he had intercepted a letter from Roy Dullub to Cajah Haddee, to the following purport: — "That he had sent him a lac of rupees by Meer Allee, to forward the design then in hand; and advised him to

* Mr. Hastings, in a letter to Clive of the 18th September, reports the suspicious circumstances that led to the dismission of Cajah Haddee, who was accused of having armed his followers with an intention of murdering the Nabob when he went on a visit to his son. This accusation was probably false, and invented, as the ground of the fictitious plot, before alluded to, against Meer Jaffier's life, said to be formed by Roy Dullub, with the knowledge and approbation of Clive.

take the present occasion to put it into execution; that both Mr. Watts and Mr. Scrafton had consented to the enterprise; and that he (Roy Dullub) had engaged to be responsible for your tunkaws." *

Clive appears to have been little pleased with the degree of attention paid by Mr. Hastings to this intrigue. "You have not yet †," he observes in reply, "been long enough at the durbar to make yourself acquainted with the dark designs of these Mussulmen. The moment I perused your letter I could perceive a design in the Nabob, and those about him, against Roy Dullub; and you may be sure what is alleged against him, and of his letter to Cajah Haddee, is a forgery from beginning to end. Roy Dullub is not such a fool as to give any thing under his own hand; his cautious behaviour, previous to the affair of Plassey, is a convincing proof of it. Besides, let his inclinations be what they will, he knows my attachment to the Nabob to be so firmly fixed, that he would never dare to intrigue against him, well knowing his life and fortune are in my power. How easy is it to counterfeit hands and seals in this country; and the Moors, in general, are villains enough to undertake any

* Tunkaws are the orders upon the revenue of the country.

† 6th October, 1758.

thing which may benefit themselves at another's expense. In short, the whole of the scheme is to exasperate me so much against Roy Dullub that the Nabob may have the plucking of all his money. The withdrawing of our protection from a man to whom it has been once promised would entail disgrace and infamy on the English nation.

"I cannot avoid entertaining the strongest resentment against the Nabob, if what you write about Cajah Haddee be true. The man who dared to accuse me of entering into schemes of assassination ought to have been punished upon the spot. After the treatment he received at Calcutta, he must have known that the English are endowed with sentiments of conscience and honour, which the Moors are strangers to; and I must desire you will inform him, that if he gives ear to such things as these, there will soon be an end to all confidence and friendship between us."

The future inquiries of Mr. Hastings left no doubt that the letter said to be from Roy Dullub to Cajah Haddee was a fabrication * contrived

* The Nabob gave a copy of this letter to Mr. Hastings, to forward to Clive. Its purport was as follows:—

"Your acceptable letter I have received: the purport of it I have duly attended to. You write that the sepoys are all unanimous in this affair, which I am very glad of. At present, it is your business to put in immediate execution

to injure that person with the English, and to afford a pretext for plundering or destroying all at Moorshedabad who were connected with, or attached to, the ex-minister.

The Nabob evinced the greatest anxiety to justify himself to Clive, for his conduct on this occasion; and as the unwearied object of the latter was to conciliate Meer Jaffier, and inspire

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the affair in which you are engaged. I will be with you in time: with regard to the expenses, I have wrote to Meer Allee, who will supply you.

"I have talked with Sayeed Cossim Ali Khan as far as necessary, and half engaged his consent. As you judge most effectual, do you bring him entirely over to our design. What was agreed upon between us, you may be assured shall be fully complied with: of this you may rest perfectly satisfied. By the means of Mr. Watts and Mr. Scrafton I have communicated the whole affair to Sabut Jung, and have gained his concurrence in it. Sabut Jung's tunkaw money, and the sepoys' arrears, I have taken upon myself.

"Let these particulars entirely satisfy you in this affair, which I desire you will bring to a speedy conclusion."

Mr. Hastings, in the letter to Clive which accompanies this document, observes, "Whether the letter is genuine or forged, I shall leave to yourself to judge, and time to determine. I own I cannot help making one obvious remark, — that if Roy Dullub was really the author of the letter, it will be a matter of some difficulty to find out what his intent could have been in writing it; as it appears of very little consequence towards the design in hand, and rather calculated to discover the whole affair, and put himself entirely in Cajah Haddee's power, than to answer any other purpose, at least that I can discover."

him with confidence in the alliance, his explanations were readily received.

Clive's correspondence, at this period, shows that he was most solicitous to improve the efficacy of his small military force; but, in effecting this object, he had much opposition to overcome. He had recommended a plan, which was carried into execution, of incorporating troops of the different settlements who had served under him into one army; giving the officers and men, from Madras and Bombay, the option of remaining, or of returning to their respective presidencies; those that remained, enjoying, of course, their rank. This arrangement was dictated by the exigencies of the service, and grounded upon the justest principles; some of the captains of the Bengal troops deemed it, however, in the instance of Captain Govin, of the Bombay establishment, to be so injurious to their interests, that they not only remonstrated against it as a supercession, but tendered the resignation of their commissions unless the grievance was redressed. This remonstrance was addressed to the Council at Calcutta, who referred it to Clive, in his station of Commander of the army. His opinion upon this case will be found in the following letter *:—

"The remonstrating captains," he observes,

* To the Council of Fort William, 5th December, 1758

"have either wilfully, or ignorantly, misrepresented the nature of superseding. An officer cannot be said to be superseded, unless one of inferior rank, in the same corps, be put over his head. Now, I can safely aver that I never, during the whole of my command, have done so by any officer, except in the case of Captain-Lieutenant Wagner, to whom I refused giving a vacant company, as I did not think him deserving thereof.

"The incorporation of the troops having been determined on as a necessary measure, the several officers of the three different establishments being now united, were, of course, to take rank according to the date of their respective commissions, in the same manner as the officers of different corps in His Majesty's service, when they happen to meet. Now, as Captain Govin had been ordered here by the Presidency of Bombay, to take the command of their detachment, without their knowing that such incorporation was to take place, it is evident they could have no design of injuring the officers of this establishment, as has been injuriously represented; and, therefore, to have sent him back, after having been so formally ordered here, would have been the highest indignity to the Council of Bombay, as well as to the gentleman himself; and, as he remained here, he had an

undoubted right to maintain that rank which the seniority of the commission gave him.

"The truth of the matter is, the most of the gentlemen who have been so violent in their remonstrances were grown sufficiently rich in your service to be desirous of any pretence for quitting it. They will prove, however, no great loss, as no services can be expected from men who have so little spirit and gratitude as to resign their commissions at this critical time, and on ill-grounded pretences.

"I flatter myself it will be now obvious to every unprejudiced person, that I have been unjustly charged by these gentlemen with having superseded them, the doing of which, I readily agree, ought to be practised as seldom as possible. Yet such is the nature of the service in this country, that the preservation of your settlement may at times depend upon the taking of such a step; and as, by the want of field officers, your captains are often intrusted with the conducting of expeditions of the utmost importance, in such case, if you be desirous of insuring success you must have regard to the man only, and not the rank."

No reasoning could be more clear, no opinions more correct, than those contained in this letter. The principles inculcated, both as to general rules and exceptions, are alike just. It breathes,

also, that calm but high spirit of command, and that firmness of purpose, which could alone support discipline in an army so constituted and so situated. It is often from such instances of conduct, more than from the most brilliant achievements, that we are enabled to form a true estimate of individual character. Clive, as appears from the correspondence in my possession, was censured by many as hazarding the territories of Bengal by the expedition under Colonel Forde; but all his private letters show that he was very sanguine in his anticipation of that brilliant success which was the result of this measure. After expressing to one of the Directors * his hope of expelling, by the operations of this detachment, the French from Golconda, and aiding the Presidency of Fort St. George, he concludes his letter in the following words:— "Success is in the hands of the Almighty; but I own I entertain the most sanguine expectations from the late armament."

With respect to the safety of Bengal, he evidently trusted in a very great degree to the influence of his own name and character. He was perfectly acquainted with the natives of India; and he knew that, with them, personal confidence, and a belief in the good fortune of an individual, had an almost superstitious in-

* Private letter to Mr. Drake, sen., 30th December, 1758.

fluence, and gave him a strength which more than made amends for the inefficiency of his force.

In the beginning of the year 1759, intelligence was received that the Shah Zada *, Shah Alum (eldest son of the Emperor of Delhi), had arrived at Benares, accompanied by a force of eight thousand men, and that his purpose was to invade Bahar, to which it was reported he was invited by Ram Narrain, the Governor of that province, whose fidelity to his allegiance continued to be suspected by the Prince Meeran, and by the Mahommedan nobles of Meer Jaffier's court.† Before we detail the measures which the advance of the Prince led the Nabob and the English to adopt, it will be useful to say a few words upon the actual condition at this period of the imperial family of Delhi.

The power of the Emperors of Delhi, subsequent to the death of Aurungzebe ‡ had

* Shah Zada means "King's son;" but, in India, has latterly been always applied, by way of distinction, to the princes of the family of Delhi. Indeed, before the assumption of the title of Sultan by Tippoo, and of that of Shah by the present Vizier of Oude, no Indian Mahommedan prince or chief, in recent times, ever styled himself Sovereign.

† Mr. Hastings, in his letter to Clive of the 8th July, 1759, obscrves, "The Nabob suspects Ram Narrain to have taken the part of the King's son; which I do not wonder at, as the Nabob has never been thoroughly reconciled to Ram Narrain."

‡ Aurungzebe died at Ahmednagar, in the Deckan, on the 21st February, 1707.

rapidly declined. That artful prince had struggled through life to maintain the appearance of health in an empire which was in a disordered and decaying state before he attained it; and by his crooked policy accelerated that destruction which was completed by the weakness of his successors.

Forty years after his decease, and after the murder or death of five intermediate princes, Mahommed Shah ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-seven years. The direction of the limited power he possessed was, during the whole of that period, an object of violent contention to the turbulent and ambitious nobles by whom he was surrounded; and, while these were engaged in intrigues and hostile struggles for the possession of the Emperor's person and his capital, others took advantage of their divisions, and of the general confusion, to usurp the fairest provinces of the empire, and to transmit them as an inheritance to their descendants.

The Mahrattas, who had only fifty years before emerged from obscurity, were so powerful in the reign of Mahommed Shah, that they plundered the suburbs of Delhi; and that capital was, during the same unpropitious period, taken and sacked by Nadir Shah, who, after his terrible invasion, restored to the unhappy sovereign of India his degraded throne and distracted dominions.

Mahommed Shah died in 1747. He was succeeded by Ahmed Shah, who reigned but a few years, when he was dethroned, and had his eyes put out in 1753. He was succeeded by Alumgeer the Second, with whom perished even that semblance of authority which his immediate predecessors had preserved. Soon after his accession, he became a mere instrument in the hands of his vizier (or minister) Ghazee-u-Deen*, the grandson of the celebrated Nizam-ul-Mûlk.

Shah Alum †, the eldest son of the Emperor of Delhi, fled from that capital. His first object was emancipation from that thraldom in which his father and family were kept by the cruel and ambitious Ghazee-u-Deen. When at a distance from court, he began to collect followers. India, at this period, abounded with military adventurers; and the high name of Shah Alum, and the reputation of his minister Ali Murad Khan, brought many to his standard. He was kindly

* The name of this chief was Meer Shah-u-Deen. He took the title of his father, Ghazee-u-Deen, or, "The Champion of the Faith."

† This prince is often called Ali Gohur; but the title of Shah Alum (or, "King of the World") is that by which he designates himself in all his letters written at this period. The Vizier, in his letters to Clive, gives the Prince this title; and it is also that by which he has since become so well known, as titular Emperor of Delhi, throughout a long life of vicissitude and misfortune.

ceived by some of the principal chiefs in Hindustan; but, according to the reports at Moorshedabad, it was Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Vizier of Oude, who directed his views to the invasion of Bahar. That prince, however, artfully kept in the back-ground, until he saw the result of the attempt upon Patna, the capital of that province.

The belief of the Shah Zada being connected with the Vizier, combined with the report of his being joined by the French party under Law*, (added to the doubts entertained of Ram Narrain's fidelity), created serious alarm to the Nabob, whose mind was agitated by other causes. His son† continued to pursue a conduct calculated to give him very serious uneasiness, while his troops mutinied, and refused to march unless their arrears were paid. To add to these difficulties, Jugget Seit and his brother, who have been often mentioned as the principal soucars (or bankers) of the country, had obtained leave to proceed on

* M. Law, who was an able man, and well acquainted with the natives, was incessant in his intrigues at this period. Clive obtained copies of his letters to Sujah-u-Dowlah, whom he endeavoured to stimulate to action by representing the unsettled state of Bengal, and the certainty of a large French force soon invading that kingdom. — See Country Correspondence, MSS. vol. xiii.

† *Antè*, pp. 348, 349.

a pilgrimage to Pursnath *, and had commenced their journey, when information was received that they were in correspondence with the Shah Zada, and had actually furnished him with the means of paying his new levies. The Nabob, giving credit to this report, sent to stop them; but they refused compliance with his orders, and proceeded under the guard of the two thousand men which he had furnished for their escort. These troops, on receiving a promise of the liquidation of their arrears, readily transferred their allegiance from the Prince to his bankers. The Nabob, if he had had the disposition, would probably have found himself without the means of coercing these wealthy subjects into obedience. The principal bankers of India command, through the influence of their extensive credit, the respect of sovereigns, and the support of their principal ministers and generals. . Their property, though often immense, is seldom in a tangible form. Their great profits enable them to bear moderate exactions; and the prince who has recourse to violence towards one of this class is not only likely to fail in his immediate object of plunder, but is certain to destroy his future resources,

* Pursnath is the name given by the Jains (the sect to which the Seits belonged) to their principal idol; and their pilgrimage was to Samet Sechara, at which there is one of his most celebrated temples.

and to excite an impression of his character that must greatly facilitate those attempts against his life and power to which it is the lot of despots to be continually exposed.

Amid his difficulties and distresses, Meer Jaffier looked exclusively to Clive, to whom he wrote every day; and Mr. Hastings's letters of similar dates represent that not only that prince, but all classes (even to the mutinous troops), confided in him, and in him alone.

Clive, before these occurrences, had been appointed by the Directors to the station of Governor of Bengal; and his nomination was accompanied with such marks of regard and esteem, as induced him to forego his intention of going to England, and to determine to remain fourteen or fifteen months longer, "by which time," he observes, in a letter* to the Council at Fort William, "I persuade myself the treaty with the Nabob will be fulfilled, the fortifications in a state of defence, and such a force arrived from England as may secure to the Company their valuable acquisitions. These three objects are what I have always had much at heart; and if they can be completed, I flatter myself the Court of Directors will think I have answered their expectations, and will approve of my returning to Europe, to enjoy the fruits of war,

* 23d November, 1758.

which has been carried on for upwards of seven years almost without intermission."

Clive complains in this letter of the intention signified by several of the members of Council to quit the service, and particularly calls upon Mr. Manningham and Mr. Frankland to alter their resolution, and to continue to him and to the public their valuable aid. H concludes this despatch with a merited compliment to Mr. Watts *, whom he considers to have had just cause given him for resigning the service.

The moment the report of the Shah Zada's advance was confirmed, Clive gave the Nabob every assurance of complete support. He wrote also to Mr. Hastings†, directing him to give confidence to the court of Moorshedabad. "The dissensions," he states, "subsisting between the Nabob and his people give me much more concern than the news of the Shah Zada's motions,

* "I cannot close this letter," Clive states, "without doing that justice to Mr. Watts which I think his great services entitle him to. That gentleman, at the manifest hazard of his life, brought to perfection the treaty with the new Nabob and other great men of the Durbar, and sent it down to Calcutta to be put in execution; that gentleman attended the army throughout the long expedition to Patna, in which his knowledge of the language, and of the natives in general, has been of great service to the Company. I could not say less in favour of one who, I think, has had just cause given him for resigning the service."

† 4th March, 1759.

as there would be little to fear from the latter, did the former take the proper measures to secure his being well served."

Alluding to the mutinous commanders who had signified, through Golam Shah *, their willingness to march, and do their duty, if Clive would give them his protection, he observes in the same letter, "I don't think it would be right to enter into any engagements with Golam Shah; but you may assure him from me, that, on my arrival in the city (which I expect will be in five or six days), I will endeavour to settle matters, that the jemidars shall have nothing to apprehend in future."

Ram Narrain had with reason taken alarm at the Nabob's designs, and communicated his fears through Mr. Amyatt †, the chief of the

* Mr. Hastings, in a letter to Clive of the 4th March, observes, "Golam Shah was yesterday with me, with whom I had some discourse upon the subject of the present dissensions betwixt the Nabob and his sepoys. He said the greatest part would assuredly quit the Nabob as soon as he took the field, and that he did not know one who would stand by him against the Shah Zada. But he added, that if you would act as mediator betwixt the Nabob and his jemidars, and engage your word for the safety of their lives and honour, he did not doubt that they would continue faithful to the Nabob, as the fear of his treacherous behaviour was the principal reason that they had to be displeased with his service."

† Letter to Mr. Amyatt, 29th December, 1758.

factory at Patna. Clive desired he might be assured of his constant support and protection. "Should any movements," he wrote, "be made with an ill design towards him, I will march myself in person to his assistance."

When Clive found that the Shah Zada was advancing to Allahabad, and had summoned Ram Narrain to obey his orders, he wrote to Meer Jaffier, stating that he did not think there was much to be apprehended from the Emperor's son. "I would not," he observes *, "have you think of coming to any terms with him, but proceed to take the necessary measures to defend your city to the last. On Monday, the last of this month, I shall take the field, and will have every thing in readiness to march to your assistance if necessary. Rest assured that the English are your stanch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

Clive subsequently wrote † Meer Jaffier that, though he considered the troops at Patna quite equal to repel the Shah Zada, the apprehension entertained of the latter being joined or supported by Sujah-u-Dowlah required that an army should march. In this letter he entreats the Nabob to have confidence in Ram Narrain.

* 10th February, 1759. † 13th February.

" He is not a great sepoy (soldier)," he observes, " but he is an honest man."

A letter * from Ram Narrain to Clive, at this period, showed that his allegiance depended exclusively upon the assurances of support he received from the English Government.

" I have from time to time," he writes, " advised you of the Shah Zada's coming this way; but Mr. Amyatt's letters will make you acquainted with every circumstance; for I always acquaint him as soon as I have any fresh intelligence. My dependance is solely upon you. Troubles are very near at hand: this is the time for assisting me. I beg you will without delay send me your orders in what manner I am to act. I am very impatient for an answer to this letter."

" Since writing the above, I learn some wicked people have been representing me in a bad light to the Nabob, and that he is very angry with me. God knows, it is on your account that I am the Nabob's servant. If at this time the Chuta Nabob † only should be sent with forces to my assistance, it will raise doubts in many people's minds, and I myself shall be suspicious. I have no dependance on any soul

* Received at Calcutta 11th February.

† Chuta Nabob means, "the Little Nabob;" by which name the son of Meer Jaffier was always known.

living but yourself. Mr. Amyatt's letter will give you many particulars about this city."

The suspicions which Ram Narrain entertained of the Nabob's hostile disposition were well founded: many documents prove this fact. Mr. Hastings, in a letter * to Clive, observes, "What the Nabob's design is in sending Cassim Ali Khan to Patna, or in deferring his own departure, I am not informed; but, as it is past a doubt that the Nabob is no friend to Ram Narrain, and has almost openly accused him of treachery in this late affair, there is but too much reason to suspect that something is intended to Ram Narrain's prejudice."

The Court of Moorshedabad continued to pursue its favourite object — the removing and plundering an able but rich Hindu, at a moment when the safety or loss of Bahar depended upon his fidelity or defection. Clive saw, and pitied this wretched policy, which he was successful in counteracting, in a manner that gave confidence to the alarmed Ram Narrain, without outraging the feelings, or bringing into public disrepute the conduct, of Meer Jaffier. There is no transaction of his life in which he more displayed that temper and consideration which the character and circumstances of those with whom he was associated required, or more calmly and firmly

* 20th February, 1759.

maintained that high reputation for good faith on which the stability of the British power so much depended.

The fears of Meer Jaffier were so great, that he proposed, as one expedient, to purchase the retreat of the Shah Zada; but Clive, the moment he heard of this intention, wrote to dissuade him from a measure which could have no effect but that of inviting others to like profitable inroads. "I have just heard," Clive writes to the Nabob, "a piece of intelligence *, which I can scarce give credit to; it is, that your Excellency is going to offer a sum of money to the King's son. If you do this, you will have Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts to the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money, till you have none left in your treasury. If your Excellency should pursue this method, it will be furnishing the King's son with the means to raise forces, which, indeed, may endanger the loss of your country. What will be said, if the great Jaffier Ali Khan, Subah of this province, who commands an army of sixty thousand men, should offer money to a boy who has scarce a soldier with him? I beg your Excellency will rely on the fidelity of the

* The Nabob, in his answer to Clive, denied the truth of this report.

English, and of those troops which are attached to you."

To Ram Narrain Clive reiterated his assurances of aid and protection. "It was," he states, in a letter * to that ruler, "on account of your strictness for justice, your courage, and your fidelity, that I got the Nabob to confirm you in the Subahship of Patna. It surprises me much to hear that you suffer yourself to be under such apprehensions of the King's son, who has not more than two thousand men. I would have you march out of the city with your forces, and encamp at a distance. Mr. Amyatt will accompany you. I have this day pitched my tent, and (with the blessing of God), if it be necessary, I will come to your assistance."

Clive received a very flowery and complimentary letter † from the Shah Zada, and another

* 12th February, 1759.

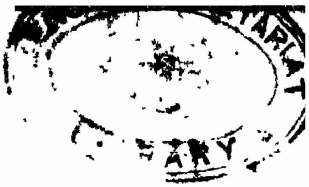
† The following is a translation of this letter:—

"To the most High and Mighty, Protector of the Great, Colonel Sabut Jung Bahader.[a]

"I know that you are under the shadow of the King's favour. My beloved son, Maddar-u-Dowlah Bahader, and the magnificent Fyaz Ali Khan, worthy of our favour, have fully

[a] The following remarks on this title, communicated by David Haliburton, Esq., to his friend Sir John Malcolm, are too curious to be omitted.

"The title of Sabut Jung, viz. 'firm or steady in war,' was first given by the Nabob Mahommed Ali to Colonel Clive, in allusion to his memorable defence of Arcot some years before; but it was after his arrival in Bengal, in 1757, that he was best known there by that title,



from his minister Maddar-u-Dowlah. The purport of both was to invite him to pay his

represented to me your readiness to expose your life for me, and many other particulars relating to you. In this happy time, with a view of making the tour of Patna and Bengal, I have erected my standard of glory at this place. It is my pure intention to bestow favour upon you, the high and mighty, and all faithful servants, agreeable to their conduct. This world is like a garden of flowers, interspersed with weeds and thorns; I shall, therefore, root out the bad, that the faithful and good ryots (God willing) may rest in peace and quietness. Know you who are great, that it is proper you should pay a due obedience to this my firman, and make it your business to pay your respects to me like a faithful servant, which will be great and happy for you. It is proper you should be earnest in doing this, when, by the blessing of God, you stand high in my favour. Know this must be done."

which was engraven on his Persian seal. One reason might be, that his own name of Clive is difficult to be pronounced in any of the languages of India. Even after a higher title, Zubdut-ul-Mulk, was conferred upon him by the Mogul Emperor, when he created him an Omra of the empire, Clive was better known through the country by the original title of Sabut Jung, which he had brought when he commanded the expedition from Madras.

"Mahommed Ali had, indeed, no right himself to grant titles. He had assumed for himself that of Suraj-u-Dowlah, which, he asserted, had been conferred on him by the Subadar of the Deckan, Nasir Jung; but it had not been acknowledged by those in the French interest, who had succeeded as Subadars of the Deckan. Be this as it may, Mahommed Ali retained that title of Suraj-u-Dowlah in his correspondence with the English. It is that even on his seals to the sunnuds for the lands he gave them near Madras, commonly called the Jaghire; and he never took any other, till he assumed that of Wala-Jah, by which he was known in his latter years.

"It is, however, remarkable, that the first title he had, of Suraj-u-Dowlah, was the same as that by which the Nabob of Bengal was known to the English, by whom he was dethroned in 1757; and perhaps was assumed by him with as little right as Mahommed Ali had. but certainly, of the two, he was placed in the higher situation, when he succeeded his grandfather Aliverdi Khan as Subah of Bengal and Bahar, which would command his procuring a high title from the Court of Delhi."

personal respects; and a letter from Fyaz Ali Khan, received at the same time, intimated that the Prince had thoughts of doing great things by Clive's counsel, and in conjunction with him."

Conceiving, no doubt, that a knowledge of this correspondence might alarm Meer Jaffier, Clive sent him copies of all the letters. He also informed him that some of the Shah Zada's agents had been with him. "They made me," he observes, "offers of provinces upon provinces, with whatever my heart could desire; but could he give, as well as offer me, the whole empire of Hindustan, it would have no weight with the English. I am well assured, too, that he wrote to every man of consequence in these parts; which convinces me that he has designs against these provinces. It is the custom of the English to treat the persons of ambassadors as sacred, and I told the Shah Zada's agents as much; but at the same time warned them never to come near me again, for, if they did, I would take their heads for their pains."

Clive, having received a request from the Nabob, marched on the 25th of February; and, after remaining a short time at Moorshedabad, he proceeded, accompanied by the Nabob's son, towards Patna.

Though the Emperor of Delhi possessed, per-

sonally, no authority; though his mandates were evaded or disregarded throughout the greater part of his dominions, on the just ground of their being issued by one notoriously not a free agent; still there existed the greatest reverence for his name. He was, as yet, deemed the sole fountain of honour; and every outward mark of respect, every profession of allegiance, continued to be paid to the person who filled the throne of the house of Timour. Until his sunnud (or commission) was received, no possession, whether obtained by inheritance or usurpation, was deemed valid, and no title of nobility was recognised as legitimate unless conferred by him. In countries like India, where the community is almost in a primitive state, usage has a power, of which it is difficult to convey an idea to those accustomed only to a more artificial and advanced state of society. At the period here treated of, when the Emperor was known to be quite powerless, and to act under personal restraint, such was the impression throughout India of the nominal allegiance to which he was entitled, that no usurper, however daring, could outrage the general feeling so far as to treat his name with disrespect, or neglect forms to which consequence continued to be attached long after all the substance of authority was fled from

that family for whose support they were instituted.

Clive appears to have been deeply impressed with the necessity of attention to this popular feeling, and to have studiously established an influence at the Court of Delhi. When Meer Jaffier obtained the sunnud (or commission) and investiture as Nabob of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, Clive was honoured, at the same time, with a high title * of nobility, and the grade of Munsubdar, or Commander in the Imperial Army; distinctions to which he appears to have attached considerable importance, and which were, no doubt, of value, as they increased his consequence in the eyes of the natives.

I have elsewhere given my opinion very fully upon this subject, and have expressed my sentiments as to the motives by which Clive was governed in all his intercourse with the Court of Delhi. I have stated "that, though general reasoners may deem such conduct a sacrifice to prejudice, a reverence to a shadow; yet the fact

* Clive's sunnud (of which a translation was made by Mr. Hastings) is a curious document, not only as being a good specimen of that florid style in which such patents were written, but as it exhibits their form, and the various offices of government through which they passed before they were sent to the individuals distinguished by such marks of imperial favour. I have given, therefore, a literal transcript of this sunnud in the Appendix.

cannot be denied, that, by making that sacrifice, and by reverencing that shadow, Clive went in unison with the feelings and opinions of millions of men. Such inconsistencies as those which exist in our connection with the fallen descendants of the house of Timour are frequent in political communities, and particularly as they have existed from time immemorial in India. They grow out of the habits, the sentiments, and sometimes the superstition, of human beings; and wise statesmen, referring to their source, will ever treat them with consideration and respect." *

Clive, when he dismissed the agents of Shah Alum, wrote to that prince in a manner which left him without the slightest hope of success in forming a connection with the English. The substance of this letter † was as follows: —" I have had the honour to receive your Highness's firman. ‡ It gives me great concern to find that this country must become a scene of troubles. I beg leave to inform you that I have been favoured with a sunnud from the Emperor, appointing me a Munsubdar of the rank of six thousand foot and five thousand horse, which constitutes me a servant of his; and as I have

* Polit. Hist. of India, vol. i. p. 540.

† 27th February, 1759.

‡ A letter from a prince to a subject is, in India, invariably termed a firman, or mandate.

not received any orders, either from the Emperor or Vizier, acquainting me of your coming down here, I cannot pay that due regard to your Highness's orders which I would otherwise wish to do. I must further beg leave to inform you, that I am under the strictest engagements with the present Subadar of these provinces to assist him at all times; and it is not the custom of the English nation to be guilty of insincerity."

This communication was expressed in terms which could not be misunderstood; but it, at the same time, preserved that tone of respect, and professed obedience to the Emperor, which it would have been prejudicial to the interests of the English Government and its ally to have neglected.

Clive, when he arrived at Moorshedabad, on his march to Patna, had a long conference with the Nabob, the substance of which he details in his letters to the Select Committee. He laid before him the causes of the internal danger with which he was threatened from seditious nobles and a mutinous army. His own conduct, he informed him, had produced these effects; and his loss of the confidence of all classes of his subjects had the natural consequence of inviting foreign invasion. These truths, he appeared to hope, might make some impression; and he further informed the Committee, that,

though he had stated his sentiments so frankly, he had, at the same time, complied with the Nabob's solicitation to ride on the same elephant with him, and adopted every measure that could support him in his administration.

In a letter, dated the 12th of March, to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, Clive informs them of the cause of the expedition to Patna, the strength of his force, and his expectations of the result.

"The Select Committee," he observes, "have already acquainted you that we were threatened with a storm from the north, and that the Mogul's son, who has for some time been in arms against his father, or rather the Vizier, his father's minister, had entered the frontiers of these provinces in a hostile manner. As the Prince is daily advancing, though but slowly, it was judged expedient that our forces should march to the northward, in order, in conjunction with those of the Nabob, to put a stop to his progress. As I flatter myself my presence will be of service to the common cause (my former successes having gained me some degree of influence in the country), I have put myself at the head of the forces. They consist of about four hundred and fifty Europeans, and two thousand five hundred sepoys; and with these, few as they are, I

trust we shall give a good account of the Shah Zada, though his army is said to be thirty thousand strong, provided the Nabob's people keep firm to him: and should even the contrary happen, and the Subadar's troops desert him, we shall be able to make our party good, and to maintain our own. Indeed, the only danger, in my opinion, to be apprehended is from the dissatisfaction among the Nabob's principal officers, occasioned by his treachery towards and ill-usage of them. However, in the several conferences I have had with him, since my arrival here, I have so strongly pointed out to him the danger of such like behaviour, as cannot fail inducing him to a change of conduct for the future; and the confidence which I know the jemidars have in the English will, I hope, retain them in their allegiance to their sovereign.

"We shall leave this to-morrow; and I propose marching with the utmost expedition to the relief of Patna, which is in great danger of being lost, as well as the whole province of Bahar, the Shah Zada being actually arrived at the Caramnassa, the river which divides the countries of Oude and Bahar. It is yet uncertain whether M. Law, with his few fugitives, will join him, or not."

When the troops reached Shahabad, advices

reached Meeran * that Ram Narrain had actually gone over to the Shah Zada. This, how-

* Clive, on the assurance of Meeran, appears, for the moment, to have believed this report. He wrote to Meer Jaffier, urging him to abandon the play of the Hooley (a Hindu feast), and to hasten to the field, if he desired to preserve his country. To Ram Narrain he wrote in the following terms: — "I have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, the letter I have now received from Mr. Amyatt; nor could aught but the great confidence I have in him induce me to give credit to its contents. Have you no sense of the obligations you are under to me for all the care and pains I have taken for you? If you had not courage equal to the occasion, yet what could have induced you to act so imprudent a part? What power has the Shah Zada to resist the united forces of the Nabob and the English? Think, then, what will be your fate. For God's sake reflect on the duty you owe to your master, to my friendship, and to your own safety. Turn from this bad design, and act in such a manner that your master may be satisfied with you, and the world acknowledge you worthy of the friendship I have shown you. Should you, from want of courage, forsake your city, be assured it will not remain ten days in the Shah Zada's power."

Ram Narrain, in answer to this letter, urged the difficulties of his situation, and his want of means for a protracted defence; but asserted his fidelity. Clive wrote in reply (29th March), "I shall continue to march, with the utmost expedition, to your assistance. Let my approach animate you to a vigorous defence; and let your conduct be such that I may never repent the protection I have given you."

When Clive was informed of Ram Narrain's having repulsed the Shah Zada, he wrote him in terms of the highest applause and encouragement: "Your behaviour convinces me not only of your fidelity, but of your bravery as a soldier; and you may be assured of my maintaining you in your

ever, proved incorrect; the wary Hindu had only faltered in his allegiance until he heard Clive was advancing.

His visit to the Shah Zada, which gave rise to the report of his defection, was merely to gain time. It was now learnt from subsequent accounts that he was defending the city, and had already repelled two attacks. Clive, who was making very rapid marches to join him, directed Ensign Mathews, who was in advance in command of a battalion of sepoys, to hasten to Patna and co-operate with Ram Narrain; a service which was effected by that young officer in a way which gave promise of the eminence which he afterwards attained.

Confident from the efforts which were made to support him, and the near approach of his friends, Ram Narrain made the most gallant exertions to save the city. Every assault was repelled, and the enemy drew back after they had possessed themselves of some of the bastions. Discouraged at these defeats, and alarmed at the near approach of the corps under Mathews *,

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subahship, even at the hazard of my life." He adds, "Continue thus gloriously to exert yourself, and be assured of my coming shortly to your aid."

* Ensign Mathews writes to Clive, from Patna, on the 6th of April, as follows:—"The Shah Zada's army, on the arrival of the English advanced guard (as they term it), raised the

and Clive's rapid advance, the Shah Zada broke up his camp, and retreated.

Clive, in a letter to Mr. Spencer of the Bombay establishment, thus shortly describes the Shah Zada's advance and flight:—"The King's son, who, about a year ago, escaped out of the Vizier's hands, has been ever since fishing in troubled waters; he has been with the Rohillas, the Jauts, the Mahrattas, and Patans; and, about three months ago, fled for protection to Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, a mortal enemy to the Vizier, and was received by him with great respect. He sent his brother-in-law, Mahommed Kooli Khan, with five thousand horse, into these parts, in hopes of effecting a revolution: and, indeed, the name of the King's eldest son was so great, that, as soon as he entered the province, he was joined from all parts; and, by the time of his arrival before Patna, his army was forty thousand strong. The ruler of this place being entirely in the English interest, what with small presents and negotiation, delayed the attack of the city for some time: but on the 23d of March the fighting began, and lasted till the 4th of April, when our advanced guard arrived

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siege yesterday morning. Had we not been so expeditious on our marches, they would have had the town this day, as they meant to storm, and had undermined one place."

within four coss of the city, upon which the Shah Zada and his forces retired with the utmost precipitation, and are now getting much faster out of the province than they came in. We shall continue following them to the bank of the Caramnassa. I hope to secure the peace of these provinces for one year longer at least, by which time the whole of the Nabob's treaty will be concluded.

"The enemy made several vigorous attacks upon the city, and were once in possession of two bastions, but were driven off with great slaughter: they have certainly lost a great many men. M. Law, with his small party, joined the King's son on the day of their retreat, but could not prevail upon him to make another attack."

While Clive was advancing towards Patna, a letter * from Meer Jaffier informed him that he had received the command of the Emperor to seize the person of the Shah Zada. The imperial edict was enclosed; its contents were as follows: — "Know that you are under the shadow of my favour. Some ill-designing people have turned the brain of my beloved son Mahommed Ali Gohur †, and are carrying him to the eastern part of the empire, which must be the cause of

* 19th March, 1759.

† The Prince, in his letter to Clive, assumed his title of "Shah Alum," by which we denominate him.

much trouble and ruin to my country. I therefore order you, who are my servant, to proceed immediately to Patna, and secure the person of my son, and keep him there. You are likewise to punish his attendants, that other people may take warning thereby. In doing this you will gain my favour and have a good name. Know this must be done."

The Vizier *, Ghazee-u-Deen, addressed a letter of the same purport to Clive, who, as well as the Nabob, appears to have considered it an object to proclaim, that, in opposing the Shah Zada, they were acting in conformity with the commands of his offended father.

The retreat of the Shah Zada was precipitate. He hastened to cross the Caramnassa, a river which divides the territories of the Nabob of Bengal from those of the Vizier of Oude; but the latter, who would have been ready to support him had he been successful, now proclaimed

* The Vizier wrote two letters to the Nabob, to the same purport as that from the Emperor. He further states, in the second letter, that Mahommed Hedayet-Buksh, second son of the Emperor, was appointed Subadar of Patna, and Meer Jaffier his naib. The nomination of the Prince was titular; but, by its being made at this period, it was, no doubt, meant to take away every shadow of a pretext that could justify the invasion of that province by the Prince Shah Alum. These letters were received at Moorshedabad on the 29th of March, and must have been written before Shah Alum left Benares.

himself the enemy of that unhappy prince, who, abandoned by his followers, and not knowing whither to fly, sought the protection of the English Government.*

Clive communicates the overture which he made in a letter, under date the 24th of April, to Mr. Manningham.

"The force of the Shah Zada," he observes, "is now entirely broken: he has himself been obliged to repass the Caramnassa for fear of Sujah-u-Dowlah, who sent a body of troops to prevent his entering into his dominions. The Prince, reduced to no more than three hundred followers, has again written to me; and, from the conversation I had with the horseman who brought the letter, a person greatly in his confidence, I find he wants, in his present distress, to throw himself upon the English, from a con-

* Clive, in a letter to Mr. Manningham of the 24th of April, makes the following observations on Shah Alum's situation at this period: — "The Prince, beset as he is on all sides, must be in great distress, and much puzzled where to retire to. I herewith send you a translation of a letter lately received from him. The letter to which he alludes, as having received from me, is an absolute forgery, as I never wrote him but one, and that from Calcutta, to which this bears no resemblance. The affair appears to be a contrivance of his, in order to sow dissension between the Nabob and me; unless it be really the consequence of the necessitous state to which he is reduced, and intended as an introduction to his throwing himself upon us for protection."

viction that there is none else in whom he can trust. I have consulted with Ram Narrain, who is of opinion * that the Nabob can never be safe, should a person of his high rank be admitted into these provinces; and that his presence would expose the country to continual commotions. I have therefore answered him, that my connections with the Nabob were of so solemn a nature, as would not allow of my affording him any protection; and on that account advised him to keep out of the way, as I was now on the point of marching to the Caramnassa. M. Law has passed the Great River †, but, we are informed, has only from twenty to thirty men with him: if so, a great number must have deserted from him, and it is probable we shall soon have some of them with us."

Notwithstanding the decided terms of this letter, the Shah Zada continued to hope that he might yet prevail upon the generosity of Clive to afford him the protection of the British Government. This, however, would have been attended with more hazard to the peace of the country than Clive thought himself justified in

* There cannot be a greater proof of Ram Narrain's desire to preserve his fidelity to Meer Jaffier, than this opinion; for had he cherished different sentiments, the ex-Prince was a fit instrument to aid his future designs.

† Ganges.

incurring; but, while he was compelled by policy to refuse his request, he did so in a manner calculated to add as little as possible to the distress and difficulties with which he was surrounded.

"I have had," he observes in a letter* to Mr. Manningham, "repeated letters from the Shah Zada, evidently intending to throw himself upon us; but, for the reasons alleged in my last, have absolutely determined against receiving him. I have indeed, (so great is his distress), sent him a present of five hundred gold mohurs†, to enable him to get out of our country; and he has, in consequence thereof, passed the Caramnassa, and is endeavouring to cross the Great River, with intention, it is said, to take refuge in the Gazipoor country."

Clive's letter to the Prince (of the 30th of April), though kind, is at once decided and explicit. "The only letter," he observes, "I had the honour to write you was by Fyaz Alî Khan's brother from Calcutta. I therein acquainted your Highness that I was under the strictest alliance with Meer Jaffier, and bound by oath to assist him. Since that time I have received repeated orders from the Vizier, and even from the King, not only to oppose your Highness, but even to lay hold of your person. I am sorry to acquaint your Highness with these

* 8th May, 1759. † About 1000*l.*

disagreeable things, but I cannot help it. Were I to assist your Highness in any respect, it would be attended with the ruin of this country. It is better that one should suffer, however great, than that so many thousands should be rendered unhappy. I have only to recommend your Highness to the Almighty's protection. I wish to God it were in my power to assist you, but it is not. I am now on my march to the Caramnassa, and earnestly recommend it to you to withdraw before I arrive there."

Clive, as already stated, had received several letters *, written by command of the Emperor, to urge him to act against the Shah Zada. When all was settled, he addressed a letter † to the Vizier, in which he states, that, "after putting

* He received one, on the 23rd of May, from Ahmed Khan, the Vizier's brother, who states, "I have heard, with pleasure, of your great fame, good actions, and sincerity. Your coming with Nabob Nasser-ul-Mulk [a], to assist and join Ram Narrain Bahader against the Shah Zada, who went into these parts against the Emperor's pleasure, and that of the Vizier my brother, and raised disturbances, was very proper and advisable. I return God thanks that, on your approach, and by your influence, the Naib of Azimabad (Ram Narrain) soon put an end to these disturbances, which has saved the King, my brother, and myself, much trouble and fatigue, as we should have been obliged to take a long journey."

† 29th June, 1759.

[a] The title of Meeran.

an end to the troubles in Bahar, agreeable to his Excellency's orders, he had set out for Bengal."

Clive had proceeded with the troops of the Nabob against the Rajpoot and hill chiefs, who had invited and aided Shah Alum. These were soon compelled by his operations to submit to terms; and this settlement enabled him to return to Calcutta, leaving a small force to aid Ram Narrain in his local administration.

Before Clive left Patna, the dangers which three months before threatened Bengal were completely dispelled; and it is not too much to aver, that the happy result of this unpromising expedition was exclusively to be ascribed to his personal efforts, and to the influence of his character. His prompt and open manner allayed, for the moment, the jealousy of the Nabob and the violence of Meeran. Their disaffected chiefs and mutinous soldiers were alone prevented from defection or excess by his presence and exhortations. It was exclusive confidence in Clive that preserved the fidelity and animated the courage of Ram Narrain to those exertions which saved the city of Patna from being plundered, and the rich province under his rule from being laid waste; and, when the Shah Zada fled, the personal reliance of the Rajpoot chiefs of Bahar on the British commander accelerated the settle-

ment of those districts which the advance of the Prince had incited to rebellion.

We have stated how much Clive studied popular feeling throughout this service, by acting in conformity with the wishes and commands of the Court of Delhi. The information of the modern historian of India appears here very defective, from the observations he has made upon this part of Clive's conduct. In describing the invasion of Bahar, Mr. Mill * states, that "the Prince (Shah Alum) having obtained from the Emperor legal investiture as Subadar of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, crossed the Caramnassa;" and, after detailing the result of his enterprise, observes †, "The hardihood of Clive was seldom overcome by scruples. Yet the Emperor Alumgeer was legitimate sovereign of Bengal, and had undoubted right to appoint his eldest son to be his deputy in the government of that province: to oppose him, was undisguised rebellion."

The facts of the case are directly opposed to the statement here given by the historian. The Prince Shah Alum, who invaded Bahar, had fled from Delhi, and was deemed to be in open rebellion against his father. He might have been, before this period, titular Subah of Bengal, Ba-

* Hist. of India, vol. iii. p. 254.
† Vol. iii. p. 255.

har, and Orissa, such rank being often given to princes of the imperial family; but we have shown that, before he crossed the Caramnassa, even that title was given to his younger brother, and Meer Jaffier appointed his naib, being a confirmation of the sunnud (or patent) he had before received from the Emperor, empowering him to rule over these provinces. Further, the Emperor Alumgeer had called upon the Nabob by his allegiance as his viceroy, and upon Clive by his duty as a commander in the imperial army, to oppose his rebellious son in his unwarranted invasion of Bahar, and urged them to seize and imprison his person, and to attack and punish his seditious followers. The first commands of the Court of Delhi upon the subject were written in February. They were frequently repeated; and in a letter, dated 18th of June, 1759, from the Prime Minister at Delhi to Clive, the commands of the Emperor were conveyed in very strong language.

"The faithful services," the Vizier observes, "which you have performed, and the pains which you have taken in the late affairs, have given me great joy; nor can I sufficiently express your praises for what you have done. Continue to behave with the same fidelity; seize the rebel, and send him to court. By the will of God, this service performed, the King will

show you the greatest favour, and your honours shall be increased."

The impression made at Alumgeer's court by Clive's conduct is further proved by the invitation given in this letter to the English to establish a factory in the city of Delhi.

" In the same manner," the Vizier adds, " as your factories are settled at Calcutta, Azimabad, and Moorshedabad, send and establish a factory at the royal city."

From these facts, of the correctness of which there cannot be the slightest doubt, it must fully appear that the Nabob and Clive, so far from being guilty of rebellion against the legitimate sovereign of India, with which they are charged, were acting throughout in conformity with the reiterated mandates of the imperial court, and were congratulated and applauded by the Emperor and his minister upon the successful results of their efforts.

Meer Jaffier remained in Bengal during the whole time Clive was in Bahar. He appears to have continued his inveterate hatred to Roy Dullub, and to have devised every means to obtain possession of his person. Mr. Hastings at one time thought he would have recourse to force for this purpose; and conjectured that a body of Mahrattas, approaching from Cuttack, which the Nabob had first invited from dread

of his own troops, and the invasion of the Shah Zada, were meant to be subsequently employed in seizing the person of Roy Dullub. He appears to have given more attention to this affair than Clive thought it merited; the latter being satisfied that Meer Jaffier, however he might enter into intrigues, would never openly commit any act which could place him in the light of an enemy to the British government, by whom he had been raised to a throne, and whose friendship and support, he must be sensible, were indispensable to enable him to preserve his power.

Meer Jaffier appears, from the correspondence of the resident, to have from the first looked to Clive as the only person who could save him in this period of difficulty and alarm; and it is but justice to his character to state that, when the danger was past, his sentiments underwent no change. His gratitude was excessive: nor was it limited to words.* He conferred upon the man whom he now considered as the preserver of that throne upon which he had established him, a jaghire (or estate) of the reputed value of thirty lacs of rupees.

The first mention of his intention to bestow this gift on Clive is in a letter* from Mr. Hastings, in which he observes, "He (the Nabob) expresses the most grateful sense of the

* 24th April, 1759.

services which you have performed for him, and declared to me his resolution to use every means in his power to procure an order from the Court* for your jaghire, being ashamed that you should do so much for him without the prospect of reaping any advantage to yourself by it."

This letter was written immediately after the Nabob had received full accounts of the flight of the Shah Zada, and the happy result of the expedition to Patna. It was not surprising that he, knowing the source to which he owed his safety on this occasion, should be anxious to reward Clive; but we learn from Mr. Sykes, who, a few months afterwards, was appointed to act for Mr. Hastings at Moorshedabad, that Meer Jaffier was influenced by additional motives to this munificent act.

In his evidence before the House of Commons, Mr. Sykes stated to the Committee †, that the Nabob, speaking to him of the expedition to Patna, "mentioned the sense he entertained of Lord Clive's conduct towards him, and likewise in reducing the Shah Zada to such necessity as to apply to his Lordship to put him under the English protection; he mentioned, also, that he

* This means the Court of Delhi. No jaghire, or other grant, was deemed complete in form till sanctioned by the command of the Emperor.

† House of Commons' Reports, vol. iii. p. 154.

owed his government to Colonel Clive before, and this was the second time he was indebted to him for it; that he had been a means of having honours conferred on Colonel Clive, in creating him an Omrah of the Empire, but that he had given him nothing to support these honours: he had frequently had it in his thoughts, but never entered seriously upon it till now; that he had thoughts of giving him a jaghire in the Patna province, but found it would be attended with inconvenience to the officers of his government; and that Jugget Seit had fallen upon a method of obviating these difficulties, by giving him the quit-rent arising from the lands ceded to the Company to the southward of Calcutta; that he thought it would interfere the least with his government, and stood the clearest in relation to the Company's affairs.

"Mr. S. said that, to the best of his remembrance, he mentioned to the Nabob that he thought it was a large sum; but the Nabob told him that it was very little adequate to the services he had received from the Colonel, but more especially for his behaviour upon the capture of Moorshedabad, when the whole inhabitants expected to be put under contribution; and that none of them had experienced a conduct of that kind, for that their persons, as well as their properties, were entirely secured to them."

Mr. Sykes states, that the Nabob, having prepared the deeds, desired him to be present at the delivery of them to Clive; which took place when the Nabob went to meet and welcome him on his return from Patna.

The next mention of this subject is made in a letter * to Clive from Mr. Hastings, after his return to Moorshedabad, in which he observes, "The Nabob desired me to draw out the form of the letter to be written to the Council about your jaghire." This letter was a few days afterwards transmitted to Calcutta.

I shall have occasion, hereafter, to speak of this grant, which gave rise to great discussion; but we must, nevertheless, make some observations upon the subject in this place.

Though Clive appears to have thought that the high titles obtained for him from Delhi should have been accompanied † by a jaghire,

* 9th August, 1759.

† In a letter to Mr. Amyatt, Chief of Patna, Clive objects, on the ground of having as yet no jaghire, to pay the enormous sum demanded as a fee for the patent of nobility sent him from Delhi; but he desires Mr. Amyatt to give the royal agent, Shitabroy, the nazeranna (or offering) customary from omrahs of similar rank. In the evidence of Clive, given before the Committee of the House of Commons, we find the following testimony on the subject: —

"That the first letter he (Clive) ever wrote about a jaghire was, to the best of his remembrance, on the 31st of January, 1759, to Jugget Seit, informing him that the Nabob

there exists no evidence, amongst all the documents I have examined, to show that he had any previous intimation of its amount, or that he, in any shape, compromised either his personal honour, or his duty to the government he served, by accepting of this grant. Conscious that he had performed great services to the Nabob, he received this reward as a recompence which that prince had a right to bestow, and which was one conformable to the usage of the country, and

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had made him an omrah, without a jaghire. In answer to which he replied, that the Nabob never granted jaghires in Bengal; that Orissa was too poor, but that he might have one in Bahar; and he declared, upon his honour, that he never applied for any jaghire, directly or indirectly, after that period; and that, when the Nabob presented him the jaghire (which was near six months afterwards), he did not know what that jaghire was; had not the least idea of the amount of it, nor of its being the quit-rent upon the Company's lands; and that he did believe the Nabob gave him that jaghire in consequence of the services he had rendered him, which have been stated by Mr. Sykes.

"That having looked upon the Nabob's answer as an evasive one, and that he was not inclined to comply with his request, he never wrote, nor thought, more upon the subject, until he received a second letter from Jugget Seit, in answer to his first, after the success against the King's son, mentioning that the Nabob had turned the thing in his mind, and was willing to grant him a jaghire in Bengal; but the nature of it, where, or what value it was to be, he was entirely ignorant of till the patent explained it. Jugget Seit was a banker, and a man of great interest and weight with the Nabob."—Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 154.

rendered more appropriate, according to that usage, from the high honour which the Emperor of Delhi had, at the request of Meer Jaffier, conferred upon him. Clive gave a complete proof of his anticipation of the approbation of his superiors in England, and of his wish to give publicity to this transaction, by accepting, as his jaghire, an assignment of the quit-rent, or government share, of the lands farmed by the Company in the vicinity of Calcutta. This arrangement, which placed his income in the hands of the Company, though it presented the best possible security, would never have been consented to by a person who had not acted with a perfect consciousness that he was violating no duty, and inflicting no injury on the interests either of individuals or the public.

These were evidently Clive's sentiments; and the transaction, at the time of its occurrence, appears to have been generally viewed in the same light. If some argued (as they might with reason) that, though no existing regulations forbade individuals from accepting such gifts, when spontaneously made by the Princes of India, a person in Clive's situation ought not to have received a reward of a nature so likely to establish a precedent dangerous to the future integrity of the service: it was probably answered, that this was no doubt correct as a common rule; but

that the circumstances in which he was placed were altogether peculiar, and never likely to recur to any individual; that he first saved from ruin, and afterwards established upon a firmer and more extended basis, the British interests in India; that he had, in his career, overcome the army of one prince whose hostility to the English was unconquerable, and raised and preserved upon his throne another, by whom the ruined inhabitants of Calcutta were restored to affluence, and a defenceless factory and a precarious trade converted into a strong government and a flourishing commerce. Was he, they would ask, — the sole and acknowledged author of this almost miraculous change, — to obtain no benefit except empty honour? Restricted by his military occupation from trade, — denying himself, upon principle, every advantage from a corrupt source, — inadequately paid by the government he served, and without a hope of any remuneration from a fluctuating body of Directors, — was he, when he compromised no duty, when he offended no law, when he injured neither the interests of individuals nor of the state, to reject ungraciously the munificent reward spontaneously proffered to him by a prince, who, though he had already enriched him with a liberal share of the treasures which he distributed to the English government and its army when they

placed him upon the throne, now owed him an obligation of almost equal magnitude? For there could be no doubt, the defenders of Clive would argue, that to him Meer Jaffier was exclusively indebted for the successful issue of the late campaign: and his merits and claims were enhanced from his having, by his qualities of a soldier and a statesman, and by the influence of his great name, reaped all the fruits of the most decided victory without shedding one drop of blood.

Such were the arguments by which the great majority became satisfied with Clive's conduct on this occasion. Their force cannot be denied; nor can their validity be impugned on any ground unconnected with his peculiar situation and extraordinary achievements. It is, assuredly, a great injustice to his memory, to view his conduct on this and similar points without the fullest reference, not only to the singular circumstances in which he was placed, but to the usages of the service to which he belonged, to those of Eastern governments, and to the principles of action which, at that period, governed the Directors of the East India Company. Besides, if, even with ourselves, there is not a man who thinks the more meanly of Cornwallis or Wellesley for the large pecuniary donations which they received from the Company, or of our Marlborough and our Wellington for the

splendid estates which they received from the government of a grateful country; can it be deemed honest or fair to apply a different rule to the similar testimony of gratitude which Clive received from the prince (the sole representative of the government) whom he had so eminently served? According to the ideas of that country, the reward was not excessive: no native of the East certainly deemed it so. And, if it be objected to as conferred by a foreign potentate, Clive must be content to share, in his fortunes as his fame, the fate of the Prince of Mindelheim, the Duke of Bronte, and the Duke of Vittoria.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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